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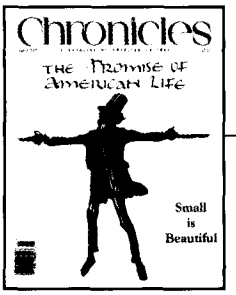
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE



PERSPECTIVE

Fortifying the Back Yard 10
by Thomas Fleming

Unearthing the remnants of real life.

VIEWS

Think Locally, Act Locally 14
by Scott P. Richert
Good stewardship.

Outgrowing the Past 17
by Tom Landess
Eminent domain down South.

Aristotelian Worms in the Leviathan 20
by Donald W. Livingston
Hobbes *versus* the human scale.

Small Is Beautiful *Versus* Big Is Best 24
by Joseph Pearce
E.F. Schumacher and true conservatism.

STORY

A Day With Cyprien 26
by Catharine Savage Brosman

REVIEWS

Learning at the Periphery 30
by Ted Galen Carpenter

Larry Diamond: *Squandered Victory*

Srdja Trifkovic on Alex Dragnich's *Serbia Through the Ages* ◆ **James O. Tate** on Andrew Delbanco's *Melville: His World and His Work* ◆ **Joseph Scotchie** on George Carey's *A Student's Guide to American Political Thought* ◆ **Kevin Lynch** on Priscilla Buckley's *Living It Up at National Review* ◆ **Thomas Fleming** on G.K. Chesterton's *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* ◆ 33

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter From Charleston: The Mongrel Din 38
by Jack Trotter

Letter From the Netherlands: The Fruits of Tolerance 40
by Alberto Carosa

Letter From Greece: Inviting the Enemy 42
by Makis Voridis

Letter to the Bishop: Seminary Boot Camp 43
by Joe Ecclesia

VITAL SIGNS

CELEBRITY: **Pop Idols** 48
by Christopher Sandford

FOREIGN POLICY: **The Dissenting Eagle** 49
by Mark G. Brennan

COLUMNS

THE WESTERN FRONT 13
by Paul Gottfried

PUBLIC PLUNDER 45
by David A. Hartman

THE AMERICAN INTEREST 48
by Srdja Trifkovic

IN THE DARK 54
Good Night, and Good Luck
by George McCartney

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD 56
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

DEPARTMENTS

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES 4

AMERICAN PROSCENIUM 5

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS 6

POETRY
The Tower of Babel by Paul Lake 12

ON THE COVER

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EDITOR
Thomas Fleming

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Scott P. Richert

SENIOR EDITOR, BOOKS
Chilton Williamson, Jr.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Aaron D. Wolf

DESIGNER
Melanie Anderson

INTERIOR ARTIST
George McCartney, Jr.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Katherine Dalton, George Garrett, Paul Gottfried, Tom Landess, Joseph Sobran, James O. Tate, Clyde Wilson

CORRESPONDING EDITORS
Wayne Allensworth, Donald Livingston, Roger D. McGrath, William Mills, William Murchison, Andrei Navrozov, Claude Polin

FILM EDITOR
George McCartney

FOREIGN-AFFAIRS EDITOR
Srdja Trifkovic

LEGAL-AFFAIRS EDITOR
Stephen B. Presser

RELIGION EDITOR
Harold O.J. Brown

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Cindy Link

PUBLISHER
The Rockford Institute

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Frugal Conservatism

I was glad to see *Chronicles* dedicate its November 2005 issue ("Reviving the American Dream") to the Southern Agrarians. Thomas Fleming correctly pointed out that the Agrarians were not simply idle romantics. Their vision was political, defending organic communities against the ravages of communism and capitalism.

Unfortunately, most of the Agrarians later abandoned this vision to pursue their careers. I fear this is the case with most paleoconservatives today, whose lifestyles are probably not very different from mainstream liberals and neoconservatives. And this is where the Agrarian message is still pertinent. In order to counter the power of socialism and capitalism, we must reduce reliance on these systems. We must be radical in the true sense of the word; we must return to roots.

A return to the farm is ideal but unlikely in the near future (though it must not be ruled out). More realizable economic goals include the pursuit of hunting and fishing and patronizing small businesses (or even starting one). Paleos must also restore economic functions to the household—rearing and educating children, caring for the elderly, growing and preparing food, sewing, entertaining, and making and fixing things. Another critical step is cutting consumption, especially the use of energy and technology.

The authentic conservative life is frugal and often difficult. But it keeps debts low and creates more free time for leisure and political activism. Also, any money saved can be used to fund those conservative causes and institutions (such as The Rockford Institute) that still rely on hard work and honest money to succeed.

—Tobias J. Lanz
Columbia, SC

On the AIDS Cover-up

In his discussion of Bill Clinton's "mini-General Assembly" (*Cultural Revolutions*, November 2005), Dr. Srdja Trifkovic claims that Thabo Mbeki's assertion—that such "traditional attitudes" of African men as violence against women and promiscuity do not play a significant role in spreading the disease—is highly controversial. Actually, Mbeki's assertion is justified. Dr. Trifkovic should read "The Chemical Bases of the Various AIDS Epidemics," by Peter Duesberg, Klaus Koehnlein, and David Rasnick, in the *Journal of Biosciences* (June 2003). These researchers offer significant support for Mbeki's statement, asking several questions: Why is AIDS not contagious? (Venereal diseases in Africa are lumped in with the AIDS "package," giving a false record of success of abstinence as a cure for AIDS.) Why is there no HIV in most patients, only antibodies? Why are the only HIV carriers who get AIDS those who use recreational drugs or anti-HIV drugs? Why is the mortality of HIV-"tested" patients treated with anti-HIV drugs five times higher than that of untreated patients?

In 2000, Mbeki invited both mainstream and dissenting factions to present their cases for their beliefs about AIDS. The dissenting scientists accepted his invitation, welcoming a debate with the mainstream doctors, but the latter group snubbed Mbeki and held their own conference in Durban.

—Edward D. Crosby
Yarmouth Port, MA

Dr. Trifkovic Replies:

I've read the article recommended by Mr. Crosby, but I am not qualified to make an authoritative judgment on this matter. It is nevertheless hard to believe that the overwhelming majority of virologists—experts of all races, nationalities, creeds, and political persuasions—reject the dissident point of view out of mendacity, racism, dogmatism, stupidity, or pique.

Reality is always more complex than we think. We need to rely on the experience of others, such as Winstone Zulu, a former member of Mbeki's Presidential AIDS Advisory Panel, who proudly and ostentatiously stopped taking anti-retroviral treatment three years after he was diagnosed HIV-positive. Two years later, he was on the verge of death and reluctantly changed his mind: "I really wanted them [the dissidents] to be right," he admitted. He has responded to treatment and now travels the world speaking against his former mentor's position.

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by David A. Hartman

A Step in the Right Direction

On November 1, 2005, the President's Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform issued its final report and received a chilly response from the proponents of tax reform (too much tax, and too little reform). However, its proposals constructively addressed key issues that could lead to a simplification of the tax code—to the extent that our huge federal deficits will allow.

The panel proposed two plans: the "Simplified Income Tax Plan" and the "Growth and Investment Tax Plan." The former provides simple-minded socialists with what they demand: a slightly more efficient and tolerable improvement of the current progressive income-tax-based IRS code, which is inherently inefficient and unreformable. The latter incorporates a radical change by substituting a border-adjusted and consumption-based cash-flow tax for the corporate-income tax, an icon of the liberals. This is significant, because it represents the first time that border-adjusted taxation—the most necessary step toward true reform—has appeared in a public document.

Both plans are committed to maintaining progressivity in the income-tax code. The current six personal tax brackets (with a top rate of 35 percent) would be condensed to four, with a 33-percent top rate, under the Simplified Plan. Alternatively, three brackets and a 30-percent maximum were proposed for the Growth and Investment version. Both plans would eliminate the marriage penalty and the alternative minimum tax. Phaseouts of exemptions, deductions, and credits would cease. Deductions for state and local taxes would no longer be allowed, and the home-mortgage-interest deduction would be replaced by a home credit based on regional average home size, at rate of 15 percent. Healthcare premiums would be universally deductible (not just for employee plans, as at present) but capped at $11,000. Social Security taxes would be levied on incomes above $44,000 but would no longer have a marriage penalty. Not commendable is a relative increase in tax credits for unwed motherhood compared with those provided for intact families.

The panel also attempted to simplify and expand opportunities for tax-free savings for retirement, health, education, and housing. "Save for Retirement Accounts" (with a $10,000 annual limit) and "Save for Family" for education, medical, and new homes (also a $10,000 annual limit) would moderately increase saving that is free of double taxation. However, taxation of investment income differed significantly between the plans. The Simplified Plan excludes all domestic (U.S.) dividends from taxation, excludes 75 percent of corporate-stock capital gains, and taxes interest as at present. The Growth Plan taxes dividends, capital gains, and interest alike at 15 percent, resulting in higher composite marginal tax rates on investment than those under the Simplified Plan.

The net effect of both plans is limited by the political prerequisite that a composite plan be tax-revenue neutral and retain the current tax code's progressivity. Both plans meet these criteria based on Fiscal Year 2006 projections. By 2015, both plans are slightly *more* progressive—that is, upper-income earners would see an increase in their already excessive share of personal tax levies. The disparities in taxes paid on similar incomes are somewhat reduced, but, since there is little or no composite change in taxation on upper incomes, which represent returns on intellectual and physical capital, neither plan can be expected to increase saving or investment radically. The elimination of double taxation on dividends, capital gains, and interest under the Simplified Tax Plan, but *not* under the Growth and Investment Plan, results in marginal tax rates that are higher by half on investment returns, nullifying the benefits of introducing consumption taxation to encourage savings.

The primary differences between the two plans center on the taxation of commerce. The Simplified Plan taxes small businesses on cash accounting after expensing of equipment at a 33-percent maximum rate. Large businesses (corporations, but also partnerships, LLCs, and S corps) would be taxed at a 31.5-percent maximum rate. Only sole proprietorships would be excluded. Depreciation (rather than expensing) would be retained at "simplified" rates. Interest paid and received would be deductible and taxable, respectively, as at present. The income tax would be "territorial," paid only on U.S. profits.

The Growth and Investment Plan taxes all businesses other than sole proprietorships at a uniform rate of 30 percent. This business tax is a modified subtraction-method value-added tax that exempts employee compensation, taxing only cash flow, or value added by capital. The tax is border adjusted by exempting exports and taxing imports. Employee compensation is exempted to prevent the tax code from becoming less progressive.

There are potential problems with this cash-flow tax. The WTO may deem that the removal of labor from value added alters its qualification as an indirect tax allowing border adjustment. An additional—and, perhaps, more serious—problem is the effect of a 30-percent tax if it *is* judged to be acceptable for border adjustment. It would be the highest border-adjustment rate in the OECD: The average rate is 17.7 percent.

It would be more advisable to put compensation back into the business tax base and credit employers for contributions to social insurance. This would put the highly regressive employer payroll tax in the general tax pool as a *quid pro quo*. The result would be the business-transfer tax base, which would qualify for WTO border adjustability. A 17.5-percent rate would generate sufficient tax to meet the requirement of tax-revenue neutrality.

Such a plan would foster extraordinary growth and investment—most particularly, in a resuscitated manufacturing sector. The panel was in the right church, if not the right pew. With a little tweaking, the goal of border-adjusted consumption taxation would be the most important reform in taxation since the sorry day the United States adopted the income tax. C

Read Thomas Fleming's
HARD *Right*
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THE RIOTS IN FRANCE were occupying my thoughts at the end of a long day, when the telephone rang. It was a friend who lives in Metz, a quiet town that is a long train ride away from Paris. "I'm looking out my window," he said, "watching an apartment building going up in flames. A police helicopter is going back overhead, but nothing is being done to stop the rioters."

I had been watching the news since the disturbances broke out, and, on All Saints, I noted that, of nearly 300 stories on Google mentioning France, only one was an American reference to the violence. When the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* finally made up their minds that the news could not be suppressed—always a painful decision for them to have to make—we quickly learned about French racism and the plight of the poor Arabs and Africans.

But, if a desire for better jobs is the reason why Muslim young men in France are rioting, raping, setting buildings and women on fire, what explains their behavior everywhere else in the world? In Egypt, where they riot to protest a secular government. In Pakistan, where they stage cross-border raids into India for the sole purpose of killing non-Muslims. In New Jersey, where they went into the streets to celebrate their victory on September 11.

To take the argument back to the source, how do we explain the actions of Muhammad and his followers, who looted, murdered, and raped their way across Arabia and the Middle East? Yes, it is true, an Islamic state, after a few decades of grotesque brutality, will generally let Christians and Jews alone. They need people to pay the taxes, handle the trade, and staff the bureaucracy—talents that are traditionally hard to find in Islamic states. Naturally, the success of non-Muslims will periodically arouse the righteous indignation of the "youths" who spend their time loafing on street corners, and a pogrom per decade is a small price to pay for living under George W. Bush's "religion of peace."

I shall never forget my first experience of this peace. I was traveling in Kosovo about ten years ago, looking at medieval churches, when I was set upon by a gang of Albanian youths who would have killed me, had my driver not had the good sense to carry an AK-47. In those horrifying minutes, I began to understood what it was like to be a Christian or Jew living under Islamic rule.

In fact, the non-Muslims of France are now experiencing what some of their ancestors endured in the days before Charles "the Hammer" beat the Muslims back into Spain. Do not expect French politicians to use such language. Interior Minister Sarkozy, after correctly describing the rioters as scum, now declares his government's eagerness to promote civil rights. France, like most countries of North America and Western Europe, has a leftist government, and only a fascist beast like Jean-Marie Le Pen or Charles de Gaulle would waste time talking about the French nation. Nations, in the eyes of leftists, are an optical illusion.

Leftists in France and the United States actually believe that the Arab youths, as victims of discrimination, are doing exactly what they ought to. Imagine you are a French intellectual approaching 60, forever dwelling on the glory days of the student riots in which you and your pals burned cars in 1968. Isn't this the same scenario? Dispossessed people struggling for freedom and dignity? As a former student protestor myself, I have to say that I have learned to hate my generation. We were nothing but trouble in the 60's, and, now that we rule the world, we are dangerous.

At the heart of the problem in France is not the teachings of a religion of violence but the stupid leftism taught in schools, preached in churches, and blathered endlessly in the media. If you do not believe that there are such things as societies or nations, then you will not object when your country is flooded with immigrants who bring an alien and hostile religion. Religion is all bunk, after all, so what difference can a few million Muslims make? Things are hardly any better here in America, where our government refuses to defend the border, even though evidence is mounting that Al Qaeda operatives are learning enough Spanish to pass as Mexicans before slipping across the border. Wait a few years, and both Paris, Tennessee, and Paris, Texas, will be experiencing the same fruits of multiculturalism that are being enjoyed in Paris, France.

Long before there was a France, there were Franks. They had stolen Gaul from the Romans fair and square, and they were not going to allow the land that fed their children to be taken away and given to feed the children of Muslim aliens. Until the French become Franks once again, until we Americans discover and defend our own identity, you can expect these hooligans to continue on their violent path, destroying every symbol of a West they envy and hate.

—*Thomas Fleming*

AMERICAN SOLDIERS stumble upon a secret dungeon and discover dozens of emaciated prisoners—173 of them, to be precise—who had simply vanished from the face of the Earth over the previous weeks and months. Horrified GIs walk wide-eyed through the stinking chamber of horrors whose inmates grasp with difficulty that their ordeal is over. Most of the latter bear obvious marks of torture as they are led into sunlight for the first time since their incarceration.

No, this is not Germany 1945, or Korea 1950, or Mogadishu 1993. The date was November 13, 2005. The jail in question was in a disused air-raid shelter of the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior; the prisoners were mostly Sunni Arabs; and their torturers were members of the Badr Organization, a pro-Iranian Shiite militia that has been given a free hand by Bayan Jabr, the minister himself, who is also a member of the Shiite Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. The Supreme Council was at the head of the political ticket condoned by Grand Ayatollah Sistani that emerged as Iraq's strongest political force at national elections in January 2005 and now effectively controls much of the government.

Since then, members of the Badr have spread out of their strongholds in the south and killed dozens of men in a sustained campaign of intimidation in Sunni neighborhoods. Last June, media reports documented several instances in which Sunni men who had been detained by uniformed men in police vehicles were later found dead. The latter are also suspected of being involved in the killing of two lawyers trying to defend Saddam

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Hussein and his associates. Oppressed for decades under Saddam, Iraq's Shiites are using the American occupation to take revenge on the Sunni community as a whole.

Sunni leader Adnan al-Dulaimi, who had complained to the government about abuses at three other Interior Ministry compounds, has called for an international inquiry. But the United States, whose own troops have faced accusations of prisoner abuse in Iraq, has ruled out any international involvement in an inquiry, saying that the Iraqi government is up to the job. American officials on the ground are perfectly aware that, if the investigation is left up to the likes of Bayan Jabr and his colleagues from the Supreme Council, it will be neither fair nor impartial. They nevertheless think that it is more important to maintain the Shiites' cooperativeness, as the entire Iraqi operation is turning into a nightmare, than to make too much fuss.

Their cynicism is understandable. If one group of Iraqis is torturing another—and *torture* is the right term, rather than the euphemistic *abuse* so beloved of the media and defense bureaucracy—they are only doing what the denizens of the Middle East have been doing to one another for millennia. Our friends Egypt and Saudi Arabia torture prisoners, as do our potential enemies Syria and Iran. Turkey does it but pretends otherwise for the sake of "Europe." Robert Fisk's latest book, *The Great War for Civilization: The Conquest of the Middle East* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), contains a sickening list of electric torture, burnt genitals, sawed-off heads, and mutilated corpses that is not for the faint of heart.

Such practices cannot be eradicated short of uprooting the political culture that breeds them. The task is formidable because of the burden of history and because torture is not deemed sinful *per se* in the Islamic world. The Koran is full of Muhammad's lovingly elaborate descriptions of agonizing torture; stonings; amputations and decapitations of infidels, sinners, and political dissidents ("those who spread mischief in the land"). In a culture devoid of any sense of natural morality, torture is OK if it is made legal—by the Prophet or by some other authority—and if it serves a good cause.

The United States should not tolerate Shiite mistreatment of Iraq's Sunnis, not because we expect to change the Iraqis' hearts and minds—that battle is lost and had never been winnable on present form—but because we need to engage the Sunni community. The Sunnis must be given a viable stake in postoccupation Iraq *in order to enable U.S. troops to come home*. Only a deal with the Sunnis may end the insurgency and create conditions for a withdrawal with some honor and dignity. That deal will necessitate the use of American political pressure to uphold Sunni interests *vis-à-vis* Iraq's Shiite-Kurdish alliance. If the Sunnis agree to enforce a cease-fire in their provinces and clean up Al Qaeda in Iraq, the price is well worth paying.

—*Srdja Trifkovic*

RALPH REED long ago proved that he is no conservative. After Pat Buchanan won the New Hampshire primary in 1996, Buchanan had a legitimate chance to overtake Bob Dole and emerge as the Republican presidential nominee. One of the major reasons he did not was the active (though largely behind-the-scenes) opposition of the Christian Coalition, its founder, Pat Robertson, and its executive director, Ralph Reed. Crucial to the eventual nomination of the Senator From Viagra was his victory in the South Carolina primary, a win that owed a great deal to Reed. Given that Buchanan was as viable a candidate as Dole at the time, Reed's support for Dole cannot be explained as a mere recognition of political reality. Instead, Reed's rejection of Buchanan clearly showed his preference for the type of temporizing, equivocal politics that had long characterized Dole, notwithstanding Reed's public support for the type of strong social conservatism long championed by Buchanan. Indeed, the disconnect was so great between the policies espoused by the Christian Coalition and the record of Dole that some wondered whether Buchanan's Catholicism played a role in the decision to support Dole over Buchanan.

More recently, others have begun to see through Ralph Reed. In June 2005, the *Weekly Standard* ran a devastating portrait of Reed by Matthew Continetti. According to Continetti, Reed spent his time under Robertson "draining the Christian Coalition of much of its explicitly Christian, or even religious, content," going so far as to suggest, in 1996, that "social conservatives ought to seek compromise on the abortion issue." Continetti also documented how Reed's lobbying firm has earned millions urging evangelical Christians to support such diverse interests as Puerto Rican statehood, the Channel One "educational" television network, and most favored nation (MFN) trading status for Communist China.

Reed is not the only former Robertson lieutenant who has attempted to cash in on his political connections. In November 2005, the *Legal Times* ran an unfavorable article on Jay Sekulow, who has parlayed his leadership of the American Center for Law and Justice into "a lavish lifestyle—complete with multiple homes, chauffeur-driven cars, and a private jet." But at least the nonprofit organizations that paid out $2,374,833 to purchase two homes used primarily by Sekulow and his wife are also spending some money to advance recognizably conservative goals. Reed, by contrast, is using the money from corporate clients to bamboozle conservative Christians and make himself rich.

According to a November 17, 2005, article in *World Magazine*, Reed raised millions from corporate interests to support permanent MFN status for Communist China and used that money to fund advertisements claiming that "A nation open to trade is a nation open to ministry" and that "an ill-advised and counterproductive trade war with China . . . would close the door to the Gospel." One of Reed's ads touting MFN for China went so far as to claim that "The progress of democracy and the salvation of millions of souls depends [*sic*] on it."

But Reed is gaining the most notoriety for his association with ex-lobbyist Jack Abramoff, whom Reed met when both worked at the national office of the College Republicans in 1981. Abramoff is now under a wide-ranging investigation by Congress and a criminal probe by several federal agencies stemming from his raising some $82 million from six Indian tribes over three years to support their gambling interests. At least $4.2 million of this money was directed to Reed's lobbying firm, which used the money to campaign against gambling in Alabama. What Reed never disclosed was that his campaign was being funded by the Mississippi Choctaws, who did not want their Mississippi casinos to face any competition from next door.

Many Alabamians opposed to gambling were shocked when they learned who had been bankrolling Reed's campaign. Dan Ireland, executive director

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of the antigambling Alabama Citizens Action Program, told *World* that "I think anyone who is against gambling wouldn't take the money if they thought it had anything to do with gambling." Mr. Ireland is right, just as one doubts that any right-to-life organization would take money from one group of abortionists as part of a campaign to shut down a rival group of abortionists. But, sadly, many of those who have sought to turn conservative activism into personal profit apparently have no such qualms, so long as the checks keep coming.

—*Tom Piatak*

CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR Arnold Schwarzenegger's slate of fairly modest governmental reforms went down to stinging defeat on November 8, 2005, leading Californians to ponder a future in which their flawed celebrity governor has little power and the public-sector unions—the targets of most of the governor's failed initiatives—are more brazen than ever.

Following the election, I spoke at a panel titled, "Where Do We Go From Here?" My answer: Nevada or Arizona. Kidding aside, California might soon face another exodus of productive, middle-class residents and small-business owners, who have long been fleeing this costly, high-tax, regulation-happy state for destinations throughout the intermountain West.

"Where to go?" has long been the big question at barbecues and parties but was less asked after the recall of an incompetent governor (Gray Davis) who was controlled by the unions. There was a sense of optimism, given that Schwarzenegger at least targeted the right villains. But immediately after his special election defeat, the governor started making amends with the unions. Now, conservatives have reason to fear that a governor who never had a firm commitment to their principles is going to tack to the left to bolster his image.

Proposition 74 would have forced public-school teachers to wait five years, rather than the current two, before getting tenure. Prop. 75 would have forced public-sector unions to ask permission before taking money from members for politics. Prop. 76 would have slowed deficit spending by limiting the growth in government to the growth in revenues from the past three years, while giving the governor additional powers. Prop. 77 would have handed redistricting to a retired panel of judges. The current system is rigged: In the last election cycle, not a single one of 153 legislative and congressional seats changed party hands.

Why did all of these propositions lose?

The governor waited months before responding to a dishonest ad blitz that depicted him as a foe of firefighters, teachers, nurses, and police officers. By the time he mounted a reply to this $100-million union campaign, it was too little, too late.

The public also reacted against the initiative process itself, voting "no" on all eight statewide ballot initiatives. Every election, Californians face a mind-numbing array of complicated initiatives. Most conservatives and libertarians, myself included, are happy that the Progressive-era reforms of recall, initiative, and referendum exist, given that, without them, there would be no way to derail the state's taxing-and-spending machine. Nevertheless, the public sometimes gets sick of having to micromanage state government, and they show this by voting down everything.

Voters are fickle. They vote for big-spending Democrats for virtually every statewide office, then get mad when deficits surge. But they get mad, too, when anyone talks about slowing the growth of government programs. So they recall the old governor, replace him with an untested reformer, then get mad at the reformer when he tries to institute some of the reforms he promised them.

Schwarzenegger had a confusing strategy. He is so ideologically muddled—his cabinet has been described as the *Star Wars* bar—that it is sometimes hard to know what he is trying to accomplish. He never communicated his goals clearly to the public.

Even if the four Schwarzenegger-backed initiatives had passed, they would not have ushered in dramatic changes. The big issue was symbolism. The governor took on the special class of people who run California—the unions—and lost.

The state's budget is bloated because of the astounding salaries and benefits enjoyed by public-sector workers, and unfunded pension liabilities are now pushing the city of San Diego to the brink of bankruptcy and causing problems statewide. No matter how bad the situation gets, it cannot be fixed because of the stranglehold of the unions. We have reached critical mass, where those who plunder the system for personal gain are too powerful to be stopped.

Maybe a move to Reno, Las Vegas, or Phoenix isn't that funny of an idea after all.

—*Steven Greenhut*

AMERICAN SOLDIERS have, for more than 200 years, risked life and limb for their country. The politicians who recruited and sometimes conscripted the soldiers routinely painted military service in glorious terms: *You are protecting America—even the entire world.*

President George W. Bush continued in this tradition last Veterans Day. The Iraq occupation "is vital to the future security of our country," he claimed. And not just that of America. He told troops at Fort Bragg that "you are making possible the security of free nations."

Alas, it isn't true. In fact, Americans are dying in a conflict that is making the United States and the rest of the world less, rather than more, secure.

Telling the truth about political machinations in Washington and U.S. foreign policy in no way denigrates the service of our troops. In fact, their patriotic loss demands political honesty.

We now know that Baghdad possessed no WMDs and was not involved in terrorist attacks on the United States. Thus, the war was not necessary for American security. It certainly did not make the world more secure.

The occupation is proving to be even worse. The invasion has turned Iraq into a terrorist training ground, creating a cadre of violent jihadists, many of whom are now bleeding back to their home countries.

The longer the occupation, the greater the hostility against America in Iraq and beyond—and the larger the number of potential terrorists created. Sadly, young Americans are dying in a campaign that actually is making their country less safe.

This has forced war advocates to emphasize humanitarian goals, contending that U.S. troops are doing good. But getting rid of Saddam Hussein was not worth 2,000-plus American lives, with so many more likely to follow.

Even granting the humanitarian case for removing a dictator, it does not justify a lengthy occupation. Hussein is out of power, facing trial. That objective has been achieved.

The argument that America is building

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democracy is much weaker. Set aside the difficulty of creating a genuinely free society without the civil and political institutions necessary for sustaining a stable political order. Global social engineering, no matter how well intentioned, does not warrant sacrificing one's countrymen.

The President and others have attempted to justify the war by circling back to U.S. security: Our freedom depends on the freedom of others. But there is no reason to believe that regimes grow more pro-American as they become more democratic.

To the contrary, at least in the short term, democracy in such nations as Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia would likely unleash greater anti-Americanism. That is no reason to stand against democracy, as the United States did during much of the Cold War. However, launching a militarized crusade to force elections in recalcitrant countries is imprudent at best.

What's left is a moral argument for spreading democracy. Democracy is laudable, but merely one aspect of a free society. Authoritarian, demagogic systems that hold occasional elections do not warrant significant effort by Washington, let alone the sacrifice of American lives.

Even the best intentions do not guarantee the best results. In Iraq, for instance, there is no guarantee that the most liberal constitutional provisions will be enforced; what Iraqi politics will look like even a couple years from now is impossible to know. Americans likely are dying today for something far different from U.S.-style political liberty.

This does not mean that democracy is not worth promoting; it is not worth pursuing through war, however. To say that the occupation of Iraq is not in America's interest is not to say that the sacrifices made by American servicemen and women are not noble. Rather, it means that their deaths are unnecessary and unjustified.

Indeed, despite the eloquent rhetoric in which conflicts—Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, and more—are routinely packaged, the crusade for democracy possesses an ugly underside. There is more than a little whiff of imperialism in the claim that the United States is entitled, unilaterally and coercively, to determine political systems in other nations.

This presumes that Americans have not only the right but the knowledge, understanding, and sophistication to reorder the world. It is hubris on a global scale. The point is not that Americans' intentions are not good, but that the consequences of war are usually unpredictable and often counterproductive.

"Power tends to corrupt," intoned British historian Lord Acton, and "absolute power corrupts absolutely." America as sole global superpower is not immune.

For what are Americans dying in Iraq? Nothing that justifies their heroic sacrifice.

We must win, explains President Bush and his allies. In effect, Americans must die to vindicate those who died before pursuing goals that have since been exposed as fraudulent or unrealistic. Political leaders in both parties must not be allowed to hide behind the soldiers whom they have put in harm's way. We must hold accountable the architects of this misbegotten war.

—*Doug Bandow*

OBITER DICTA: This issue marks the opening of the 30th volume of *Chronicles*. (Watch for a special 30th anniversary issue in July.) With this issue, we are pleased to add two new editors to our masthead. Contributing editor **Tom Landess**, of Charleston, South Carolina, has written numerous books, some of which have been published under his name. He is a former professor at Vanderbilt University, Converse University, Furman University, and the University of Dallas.

Corresponding editor **Claude Polin** is a professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne. He is the author of numerous works, including *La cité dénaturée: Cité classique contre cité moderne*.

In addition, with this issue, we are pleased to welcome back **Joseph Sobran** as a contributing editor. A syndicated columnist, lecturer, and speaker, Mr. Sobran is the author of three books, including his most recent, *Hustler: The Clinton Legacy*.

Our poet this month is **Paul Lake**, who teaches English and creative writing at Arkansas Tech. His second collection of poetry, *Walking Backward*, was released by Story Line Press. The author of *The Measured Word: Essays on Poetry and Science* (University of Georgia Press), Mr. Lake has published poems in the *Formalist*, the *Hudson Review*, the *Sewanee Review*, and the *Paris Review*, among others.

Our cover is a reprise of the July 1991 cover, by renowned artist **Warren Chappell**. The subtitle, "Small Is Beautiful," is in honor of E.F. Schumacher's book of the same title.

Our interior art is provided by our designer, **Melanie Anderson**. Mrs. Anderson received her B.F.A. from Northern Illinois University.

Additional interior art is provided by **Elizabeth Wolf** of Chicago. Miss Wolf received her B.F.A. from the School of Art at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Recent articles from Our Website
Hard Right
by Thomas Fleming
—Immigration: The Plague of Both Their Houses
—Sex and Death
News & Vie
by Srdja Trifkovic
—The "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq"
—Insecure Homeland
Paul Craig Roberts
—We Must Hold the Scoundrels Accountable
—Don't Confuse the Jobs Hype With the Facts
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by Thomas Fleming

Fortifying the Backyard

"Cincinnati is no mean city," one of my Greek professors used to say when he wanted to illustrate the use of litotes. I lived not too far north of Cincinnati for three years and spent a good deal of time in what was and is one of the few cities of the Midwest to survive the depredations of suburban sprawl and urban renewal. Built on seven hills rising up from the Ohio River, Cincinnati inevitably invites comparison with another city—this one, on the Tiber. The hills of Rome have often served to push apart the sections of the city into distinct neighborhoods, and a modern Roman from the artificial hill of Testaccio—a poor neighborhood built over a trash dump of potsherd and debris—will still claim to be the truest of Romans.

Rome on the Ohio has also been a collection of strong-minded neighborhoods. At a cocktail party, I once asked a lady where she was from.

"Wyoming."

"But I thought you were a native," I said in some confusion, though I ought to have recalled that Chilton Williamson's adopted state shares a name with a Cincinnati neighborhood.

Most vast conurbations are, in fact, divided into sections in which some semblance of village localism is maintained within the urban context of Florence or London. Neighborhood rivalries, even when they turn violent, are a healthy expression of man's devotion to a particular place, though I do not know if Chesterton's beloved Notting Hill is ready for secession.

Conflicts between rival clans and competing quarters were as much a feature of medieval Italy as were the wars waged between the cities of Tuscany. Like most Tuscan towns, Siena was notorious for the rivalry and lethal brawls among its *contrade*. The violence was eventually sublimated into the (now) semiannual horse race, the Palio delle Contrade. Though the Palio may seem like a phony spectacle concocted to attract tourists, jockeys and drummers of the neighborhoods take it as seriously as a medieval tourney, and, all over town, people proudly fly the symbolic banners of their section. When my daughter spent a term in Siena, it was a matter of usually friendly controversy in her host family that the husband and wife came from different *contrade*.

Although no match for Rome or even London, Cincinnati is a real place with its own traditions of good music and food (the gift of German settlers) and nicer manners than is common north of the Ohio. (The city was also settled by Virginians.) Cincinnati is home to a decent symphony orchestra and a music festival that takes advantage of the city's excellent church choirs. The school of music at the University of Cincinnati is almost as well known as the university's program in classical archeology.

It was the bust of Carl Blegen I saw this morning that set me to thinking of Cincinnati. The bust was set up in front of the little museum in Chora (which, in modern Greek, means merely "village"), where the many artifacts from Nestor's Palace are housed. Blegen was the University of Cincinnati archeologist who led the American team that excavated the site not far from the modern town of Pylos, perched at the entrance to Navarino Bay, where, in 1829, the fleets of France, Britain, and Russia destroyed the Turkish fleet and sealed the doom of the Ottoman Empire's 350 years of misrule in Greece.

Excavations are expensive, and UC's work at Pylos was financed by Mrs. William Taft Semple, whose fortune came from Procter & Gamble. What inspired philanthropy, to unearth a Bronze Age palace complex that had been visited by Telemachus in search of his lost father, Odysseus, while, at the same time, putting Cincinnati and its university squarely on the map—not just of Ohio or of the United States, but of the civilized world! I cannot think of another pairing of "sister cities" that has done so much good.

Modern Pylos is a pleasant town of some 2,000 souls, where the locals sit in the park drinking iced coffee, watching the ships pass by. This morning, there were two small naval vessels and two black submarines floating on the surface like exhausted whales. This afternoon, a container ship is drifting past my balcony, and there is only a freighter, painted pond-slime green, tied up to the dock where yesterday, about 5:30, I watched a navy ship unload a squad of armed sailors who marched to the park, where they were joined by a military band and a bevy of local beauties dressed in folk costumes. As the band played, in turn, the "Marseillaise," "God Save the Queen," and the Russian and Greek anthems, the respective national flags were taken down and entrusted to the young ladies. Then, to the accompaniment of a crisp tune, the sailors marched back to the ship, followed by the girls gravely carrying the outspread flags. They parted at the waterfront, as the sailors marched onto the ship and the girls turned the corner and disappeared with their symbolic tributes to the victors of Navarino.

If I had a boat, I might sail up the coast toward Odysseus' island of Ithaca that lies across from the Echidnae Islands, where Don John of Austria and the Venetians (including a few ships from Kotor) battered the Turkish fleet that had sailed out from Naupactus, known in the West as Lepanto. Between the Echidnae and Naupactus lies another great scene of battle, Missolonghi, where Lord Byron found the death he had been seeking. Skeptic and rationalist that he was, Byron dreamed that Greece—and England—might be free, and, although he was as weary a world traveler as his Childe Harold and Don Juan, he gave his treasure and his life helping the Greek subjects win their nationhood. Now, the leader of Greece's "conservative" party, Prime Minister Karamanlis, supports the Turks' reentry into Europe. Though public opinion is solidly against admission of Turkey into the European Union, only the tiny Orthodox People's Party (see Makis Voridis's "Letter From Turkey" in this issue) has had the courage to speak out.

The Turks and the equally pernicious European Union seem very far away here

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in Bronze Age Pylos, which was the political, military, and economic hub of the Western Peloponnesus. The Linear B tablets that have survived tell the tale of an elaborate bureaucratic economy. It all came to smash about 1200 B.C., when the hilltop palace was destroyed by fire, an early victim (probably) of the rough Dorian Greeks, whose invasion put a full stop to the high civilization of Mycenae. Nestor's grandson, so it appears, led his people eventually to Athens, whence they launched their colonizing expedition to Ionia.

The remnants of the palace dug up by Blegen's team, along with the remains of nearby tombs and settlements uncovered by Spirydon Marinatos (whose bust has been erected on the other side of the entrance), give evidence of an advanced culture whose aristocrats demanded their comforts. In the wake of the collapse, the Greeks, falling to a stage of development lower than anything they had known for centuries, were forced back into the habits of militant self-reliance that would later give rise to the farmer-soldiers who defended the Greek cities of the sixth and fifth centuries. Much the same happened in the Latin West when our own savage ancestors set upon the body of the Roman world and, with tooth and claw, dismembered and devoured the great work of time, forcing Britain and Gaul into a lower standard of living than the Greeks enjoyed during the dark age that followed the collapse of the Mycenaean citadels. And yet then, too, in the early Middle Ages, Western man fell back on his ultimate natural resources: a brave man's strong right arm, loyalty to kith and kin, and faith in God (or, as in the Greek case, gods).

There are no great iron laws of history, and nothing could be more futile (or more tedious) than the attempts made by Hegel, Toynbee, and William McNeil to reduce the experiences of billions of diverse human beings down to such petty formulas as a single individual can devise to fit his small intelligence. Nonetheless, human nature has its tendencies, and, much like a stream of water, they can be channeled, dammed, or diverted; but, when the levees are neglected or the dam breaks, when a civilization overextends itself and sucks the vitality from the very sources of its power and legitimacy—from families, clans, villages, and religion—the force of gravity will always draw water back to a natural course, and the human heart back to the things that nourish it.

Wise old Nestor, as he never tired of reminding the whippersnappers in the army, had seen several generations of men command and go before heeding Agamemnon's call to muster his men for the catastrophic expedition against Troy. And when Agamemnon, following the bad advice of a lying dream, sends his soldiers rushing to the ships, Nestor (*Iliad* II 362-68) advises him, once the men have been quieted down, to

> separate the men into tribes and brotherhood [that is, clans] so that brotherhood may help brotherhood, and the tribes help tribes . . . Then you will know who of the leaders and which of the peoples are cowards, and which is brave, for they (the tribes and clans) will be fighting on their own account.

In other words, the army of diverse Achaeans has not been forged into a fighting unit, and Agamemnon has to rely on their more elementary loyalty to tribe and clan.

Nation-states today remain an unpleasant necessity as a bulwark against globalization. Some of them, like Britain and Spain, were forged in the crucible of historical struggles; others, such as Brazil and the old United States, are the products of successful secession movements. Too many—Germany, Italy, the United States post-1865, and most of the states of Central Europe—are little more than lava flows that spilled out of the volcano of the French Revolution and hardened into lines on a map. These artificial constructions may serve to halt the juggernaut rushing toward world government, but they can rarely command our unthinking allegiance.

In defiance of all the powerful agencies of globalization—mass schooling, mass media, mass culture—historic identities survive in Europe and North America, as anyone traveling from Michigan's Upper Peninsula to the Mississippi Delta is made aware. Sicilians are still Sicilians, not yet the generic Italians that government schools and RAI broadcasts are trying to fabricate.

What of the Greeks? I simply do not know enough to say. Ancient Greece was fractured into regions and dialects within which principalities smaller than Rockford fought one another with a gusto usually reserved for athletic contests. Much of this healthy parochialism survived both the Macedonian conquest and the Roman Empire, which preserved local autonomies and even recognized the independence of some dozen free Laconian cities. The people of the Mani peninsula (the second finger from the right sticking south from the Peloponnesus) never lost their sense of place, and, although fighters from the Mani played a very prominent part in the struggle for Greek independence, they were the first victims of a Greek state that repudiated its past and adopted the latest Paris fashions. The poor Maniotes went from being nominal and defiant subjects of the sultan to becoming obedient subjects of the brand-new government.

Modern Greeks, like modern Americans, are being taught to despise their cultural heritage and to enrich their imaginations on alien cultures; at the same time, we are all told to give our hearts to a transnational state and global mass culture that will someday encompass the world.

For Greeks, America is a potent symbol of the global anticivilization they are being encouraged to join. In Chapel Hill, I shared a house with a Greek tavern keeper from Larissa named Miltiades Polyzos, whose visa identified him (much to his annoyance) as Mel Polison. Mel loved his adopted country. Her very uniformity enthralled him. "I can travel from North Carolina all the way to California," he told me, "and eat in the same chain restaurants, stay in the same motels, and hear the same American talked by the same Americans. In Greece, I can't drive over a mountain without finding a foreign country."

That was 30 years ago, and Greeks have undergone the same artificial process of nationalization that has been imposed on all authentic peoples. What unified the ancient Greeks, who squandered so much of their energies on efforts to destroy one another, was a common language (albeit one that existed in several families of dialects), a common religion (that took a unique form in every locality), and a common culture that was solidified in the great pan-Hellenic games held at Olympia, Delphi, and elsewhere. This tension between local patriotism and an international religious civilization was maintained under the Roman Empire and in the Middle Ages, and our task today—as it has always been—is to maintain the heritage of Christendom at the same time we are fortifying our own backyard.

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The Tower of Babel
by Paul Lake

When words were few and men spoke with one tongue,
We joined together with a common aim:
To make a ziggurat so straight and strong
It touched the sky and scored it with our name.
And so, bound to one purpose, we began
Moving in concert, with a single voice
Vociferously approving our great plan,
And mounted heavenward by common choice.

But as our project neared its terminus,
A few beneath their breath began to mutter.
Our purpose seemed far less unanimous.
As we laid brick on brick or cleared a gutter,
A skeptic sniffed, "The thing looks like a phallus,"
And argued that we builders should define
The project in whatever way allowed us
To shape the building to our own design.

Then louder (over muttered cries of *treason*)
A mason said it lacked a cornerstone
Of universal truth or human reason
To ground it firmly, and that each alone
Was laboring pointlessly unblocking drains
To keep a pile of cracking sun-baked bricks
From slumping in a wash of summer rains.
Our common bonds were chains. Our politics
And universal happiness disguised
A system by which evil patriarchs
Enslaved our thoughts, he further theorized,
Stamping our wet clay with our master's marks.

Then in the hush, a scribe was overheard
To say that words themselves were prone to slide
Like muddy bricks, till definitions blurred
And none could tell what things they signified.

Once every builder came to understand
Our lovely language was a set of tricks,
Our tongue and tower built on shifting sand,
And we shaped, stamped, and laid in rows like bricks,
We railed against the evil Will-to-Power
That gulled us with the sinister illusion
That we could make a name or build a tower,
And, laying down our loads, fell to confusion
And scattered through the earth with little sense
Of purpose till those similarly inclined
Discovered cultures in their difference
And learned to speak with one voice and one mind.

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by Paul Gottfried

A Loyal Life

A remark I recently overheard on FOX News captured a key difference between Sir Alfred Sherman, whose assessment of the Thatcher years I now have in my hand, and those minicons who float on and off of FOX. Commenting on the visit of Prince Charles to the United States, one of the news interpreters began grousing that the English have royalty. This complaint went beyond noting the dangerously stupid remarks that the Prince of Wales had made about Bush's failure to show a proper appreciation for Islam.

The minicon's censure boiled down to this: By perpetuating monarchy, the British are negating the democratic ideal that "nobody should be born into a higher position than anyone else." I wonder where this "conservative" has been living. Certainly not in the United States, where the children of rap artists (assuming they have them) and politicians have vastly more influence and visibility than I do. At least monarchy permits such privilege in return for real responsibility. And if one can point to the questionable intelligence of the present British royalty, one can also cite the sterling intellectual and moral qualities of today's Habsburgs and those of at least several Balkan claimants to unoccupied thrones.

An attribute that shines through Sherman's *Paradoxes of Power: Reflections on the Thatcher Interlude* is the loyalty displayed and embodied by this octogenarian author, whom I visited in his London apartment two years ago. Born on London's East Side in 1919, the scion of Russian Jewish immigrants to England, Sir Alfred (who was knighted during the Thatcher years) is effusively loyal to the prime minister he advised (and also gently scolded). He believes that her attempts to dismantle the welfare state did not go far enough but considers her run as prime minister (1979-1990) the last point at which something might have been done to turn around the English managerial state and to reduce its clientele. From the time that Thatcher was being groomed as a Tory leader, Sherman had been her confidant, and his Centre for Policy Studies, organized in 1974, became the think tank she consulted after taking the reins of parliamentary power. That she abandoned this advisor for other voices and that Sherman's longtime associate and the Tory minister of education, Sir Keith Joseph, moved away from his former hard-line critical stance toward the entitlement state were jolts experienced by Sir Alfred. He argues doggedly that the opportunity for a breakthrough in undoing the managerial revolution in England was gone by the early 80's.

Although there are other problems that Sherman wished that Thatcher had engaged frontally, particularly cultural and immigration crises, he does view her as a friend and patron who criticized the direction of the welfare state and emphasized its radical incompatibility with older British institutions. Even more importantly, Sherman expresses his devotion to those aspects of British life to which the history of his country is bound: her monarchy, the Anglican Church, and her social standards. He often sounds like a classical conservative, even while advocating a free-market economy—and despite the fact that he continues to defend the Republican left in the Spanish Civil War. In fact, Alfred may be the only person alive who will energetically justify the czarist empire as a bulwark against Islamic expansion (and against Habsburg and 19th-century British Tory complicity in this process) and then unexpectedly insist that General Franco overthrew the lawful government of the Spanish Republic. (I confess to being on the opposite side of both issues.)

Needless to say, this attachment to murderous Spanish leftists, who had suspended anything resembling civil liberties in their country before the uprising of insurgent generals, tells us nothing about the speaker's overall orientation. For many decades, he has been an outspoken anticommunist and antisocialist; and, after a brief conversation at a gathering in Scotland of the Mont Pelerin Society in 1976, I met him for the second time on a visit of scholars invited to Chile in the late 80's—sponsored by Chilean conservatives, among them presumed supporters of the Pinochet regime. At that time, I was impressed by how fluently Alfred spoke Spanish (as well as a half-dozen other languages, including French, which he speaks at home with his French-speaking Portuguese wife). It turned out that my high Tory travel companion had fought on the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War while a fervent communist; and, although he has since changed his political opinions fundamentally, he continues to favor that side in the Spanish upheaval for which he risked his life.

This may have something to do with Sherman's loyalty to persons. Contrary to those lunatic German youth who march to express their endorsement of the Anglo-American forces that firebombed their cities and ancestors in 1945, Sherman is loyal to his comrades and relatives, even when they fought for a cause that is incompatible with the things he now believes. These are conservative loyalties, however implausible this may seem, because their objects are comrades, kinsmen, and national communities as opposed to abstract ideals. I suspect that such loyalties might also require an English monarchist to cover up his future king's ravings, provided they are not turned into government policy. After all, monarchism is not about ideology but, like feudalism, about personal ties. It also assumes, according to Hegel, that the monarch represents in his person a distinct, self-conscious people. Would it be in the interest of an English nation, or anything Alfred Sherman might recognize as such, to welcome Muslims in order to accommodate a dotty monarch? The English are not likely to face such a problem, seeing that they have stripped their royal family of effective power. Their plunge into multicultural self-destruction, as Sherman explains, is the work of their political class and of an expanding managerial state. FOX News would do well to focus its criticism on Prime Minister Blair instead of raging against a powerless future king. c

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Think Locally, Act Locally

Good Stewardship

by Scott P. Richert

The reaction to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision last June in *Kelo* v. *City of New London* has largely been edifying. Most commentators, and even many politicians, have greeted with horror the news that local and state governments are free to take property from one private owner to give it to another, as long as the transfer serves the "public good"—defined, of course, not by the person whose property is being seized but by the government doing the seizing. A majority of states have introduced legislation to counteract the effect of this decision (though, as of this writing, few if any have actually passed such legislation), and several bills are being considered in Congress that would penalize states that did not voluntarily restrain themselves.

Oddly, though, some praise for the decision—however guarded—has emerged from unexpected quarters. While we might expect some libertarians to cheer any ruling that, in practice, will increase the power of developers and of the nationwide businesses that fund libertarian think tanks, conservative support for the opinion is somewhat more surprising. Some conservative commentators, however, have seen *Kelo* as the first major attack on the Incorporation Doctrine, by which the restrictions of the Bill of Rights (originally applied only to the federal government) have been extended to the states.

Even if that is true (and, if so, it was certainly not what the Court intended), it is a limited reversal of the Incorporation Doctrine that, in some ways, is worse than no reversal at all. *Kelo* is a nearly perfect example of the kind of federal action that we have seen for nearly 40 years now, which goes under many names—revenue sharing, the "New Federalism," unfunded mandates. Under all of these, the federal government seemingly devolves some power back to the states and localities, but, in the process, severely restricts how that power can be used. Such restrictions may take the form of, say, limiting highway funding if a state chooses not to enact a certain maximum speed limit or allowing states greater latitude in resolving environmental cleanup issues, as long as the final cleanup is conducted according to federal standards.

In *Kelo*, however, isn't the Supreme Court actually returning power to the states and localities *and* expanding the scope of that power, by allowing them to do something—transfer property from one private owner to another—that, in the past, the federal courts would have prevented? Yes, but that is not the whole story. In removing the power of the federal courts to rule on the legality of a state or local eminent-domain proceeding, the Supreme Court also defined the terms under which those proceedings can take place. Previously, no state constitution allowed the exercise of eminent domain for anything other than "public use." In other words, the property had to end up in the hands of the government. That is not to say that some states and municipalities hadn't pushed the boundaries—both Pittsburgh and Rockford, Illinois, have had notable cases over the past few years that never made it to the Supreme Court, and, of course, there is the infamous 1981 *Poletown* decision, in which the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that Detroit could raze an entire neighborhood to give the property to General Motors to construct an assembly plant. These, however, were the exception, not the rule; under *Kelo*, that is no longer the case.

Ironically, the Michigan Supreme Court had reversed the *Poletown* decision at the end of July 2004. In *County of Wayne* v. *Hathcock*, the Michigan Supreme Court unanimously declared that "We overrule *Poletown* in order to vindicate our constitution, protect the people's property rights and preserve the legitimacy of the judicial branch as the expositor, not creator, of fundamental law." A little over ten months later, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down *Kelo*, declaring, in essence, that the Michigan Supreme Court had been mistaken—in *Hathcock*, not in *Poletown*.

This ability of the federal government—courts, Congress, executive agencies—to define the terms of state and local action, expanding it as well as restricting it, is why we have seen the recent spate of state legislation concerning eminent domain post-*Kelo* attempting to return the power to its traditional limits. If the federal government were not still defining the debate, none of this legislation would be necessary. But why hasn't any of this legislation actually passed?

The simple but sad answer is that states and localities, even if they claim otherwise, are perfectly happy to let the federal government determine the limits of their powers. There is something very liberating about being able to say, "We'd like to do this, but the EPA won't let us." And, even more to the point, there is great political cover in being able to say, "We think it is wrong to take this house, which has been in this family for four generations, to give to Wal-Mart, so they can build their fourth Supercenter in a ten-mile radius, but the Supreme Court says that this is allowed, so what can we do?"

Federal regulations allow states to pass the buck on up to Washington, D.C. For localities, state regulations perform the same function. Several months ago, here in Winnebago County, Illinois, an Indian Muslim petitioned the county board for a special-use permit to allow him to open a Muslim slaughterhouse just outside the city limits of Rockford. Despite the fact that no one considered this an appropriate use for this location, few members of the county board wanted to touch this issue. And so the board voted 19-5 to grant the special-use permit, arguing that they could not do otherwise, since

Scott P. Richert is the executive editor of Chronicles.

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the petitioner had declared that he would comply with state and federal regulations concerning the operation of a slaughterhouse. And yet, of course, the power to stop the slaughterhouse did not rest with the federal government or with the state of Illinois, but with the Winnebago County Board, since this was a request for a special-use permit—in other words, the county had to suspend its own zoning regulations to allow it, and federal and state regulations provided it with the political cover to do so.

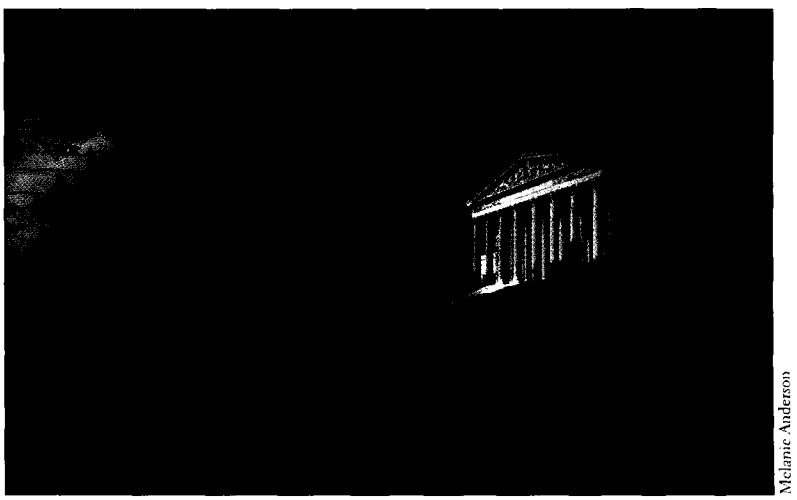
This is the great danger that *Kelo* represents. In almost every case, the corporation or developer who will ask a local government to exercise eminent domain on his behalf will be able to afford more political clout than the person who currently owns the property, and he will likely be able to demonstrate that his use of the property will result in higher tax revenues for the local government. The local government, acting in its own interests rather than the interests of the people it represents, will be able to throw up its hands and say, "The Supreme Court says it's OK," while uttering a silent prayer for the long life and continued good health of the *Kelo* majority.

We have seen something similar play out in the expansion of free trade over the past 30 years. American multinationals and other large, publicly owned corporations have successfully lobbied Congress and a series of presidents to negotiate and sign a number of trade agreements that have made it easier for them to move production down to Mexico or overseas, where they can take advantage of lower labor costs and less oppressive environmental regulations to slash expenses. Then, when someone draws attention to the decline of American manufacturing—a decline that coincides with the era of trade agreements that they lobbied for—these same corporations point the finger at the very government that made their actions possible, claiming that federal taxes and environmental regulations and laws protecting trade unions have made it impossible for them to keep their operations in America and arguing that they are simply taking advantage of treaties that the federal government signed, conveniently leaving out the role that their lobbying money played in getting the treaties drafted in the first place. Caught between a multi-billion-dollar corporation and a distant federal government, the average worker and his family have no recourse.

That question of distance, which is another way of expressing the problem of scale that Donald Livingston discusses in this issue, can often make it harder to solve a political problem, and not only because it allows those involved to renounce their own responsibility. Take, for instance, environmental regulation, which, in more cases than we might care to admit, has had adverse environmental effects, because it has alienated the very people who should be at the forefront of environmental stewardship—namely, property owners.

Man's proper relationship with the physical world is one of cultivation. Those who understand the basics of organic gardening know that composting is not simply an efficient way of recycling kitchen scraps. Every year that an organic gardener places compost on his soil, he improves it at a rate a hundred times faster than Mother Nature herself would. He is able to do this because of the rather intimate relationship that he has with the land that he is working, a relationship that an industrial farmer, spraying pesticides on several square miles of land from the cab of an air-conditioned supertractor, could never have. As for an EPA bureaucrat who lives in an apartment building in Washington, D.C.—well, the problem is obvious.

When the very soil in my backyard garden falls under environmental regulations promulgated by unelected bureaucrats in Washington, D.C., we might call this "Think globally, act globally." Centralized regulations, by their very nature, treat Portland, Maine, the same as Portland, Oregon, and Harbor Springs, Michigan, the same as Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. That is not good stewardship. The idea of Congress passing an environmental law that applies equally to the two Portlands is as nonsensical as me trying to exercise good stewardship over my uncle's land in Wyoming from my home in Rockford, Illinois. I cannot do it; it isn't physically possible, and, more importantly, it isn't morally possible. Why? Because I care more for my own land than I ever could for my uncle's. Why? Because it is mine—or, more accurately, it is a part of me and of my family. To ask me to provide equal stewardship to my land and to my uncle's is as wrong as asking me to love his children as if they were my own. I cannot do that, and, morally, I would be a bad father if I did.



Melanie Anderson

Many environmentalists are fond of the slogan, "Think globally, act locally." In other words, think of global warming and use your car less; think of overflowing landfills and recycle. But the potential impact on the global environment that any person or family would make with these actions is minimal—less, perhaps, than the impact made by the beating of a butterfly's wings, which are fabled to be able to cause a hurricane on the other side of the world. Trying to convince people to engage in such behaviors for global reasons will never go very far, because moral activity is ultimately a question of acting on a human scale.

Most people intuitively realize this—this is, after all, why Sally Struthers does not ask you to send money to help all the starving children in Africa but promises that all of your money will be used to feed a single child, whose picture you will receive. But that intuitive realization is being drummed out of us by the constant attempt to make everything a national or international problem—race, education, the environment. It is not enough to treat everyone we meet with respect; we must, we are told, learn to love people we have never met and never will meet as much as we love our neighbor. It is not enough to ensure that our own children have a good education, and to pay for it; we must ensure that there is "no child left behind," and if that

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means more federal taxes to equalize funding between the poorest school district in Mississippi and the richest one in Connecticut, then the folks in Connecticut will just have to pay twice. And it is not enough to cultivate our own land and to refrain from activities that harm the world we live in (which is much smaller than the world we live *on*); instead, we must care deeply about the snail darter and the spotted owl and other creatures that have never set feather nor fin in Illinois, and we must pay the federal government to clean up environmental damage that others have created—often with the prior blessing of that very government.

If I spend my time worrying about how children are reared in China or Ethiopia, my children will probably suffer. It is no coincidence that some people who devote their lives to running around the country, delivering lectures on family values and the best way to bring up other people's children, fail with their own.

Farmer, poet, novelist, and environmental essayist Wendell Berry argues that we should "Think locally, act locally," which drives home the point that moral action always has to be on a human scale. If I put as much effort as I can into rearing my children well, I might succeed; if, however, I spend my time worrying about how you are rearing your children, or how children are reared in China or Ethiopia, my children will probably suffer. It is no coincidence that some of the people who have devoted their lives to running around the country, delivering lectures on family values and the best way to bring up other people's children, have failed with their own.

Those who "think globally, act globally" can have very real local effect—often destructive. Up until the creation of the intercontinental railroad, most meat was processed at a very local level—at your own back door or perhaps in the nearest town, by a butcher you knew personally. The railroad, however, allowed for the mass transport of cattle, and the raising of cattle became fairly centralized. This meant that the meat-processing industry became centralized, too, in cities such as Chicago, which had huge meat-processing plants right at the stockyards. The centralization of meat processing led to a number of health problems, and eventually Upton Sinclair wrote his famous exposé of the conditions at meat-processing plants. Setting aside the question of how much of *The Jungle* is pure fiction, the book led directly to federal regulations on meat processing that imposed severe financial burdens on meat processors, which led to further centralization of the industry as smaller processors were priced out of the business. Today, meat is processed hundreds, even thousands, of miles away from where it will be eaten, and such life-threatening bacteria as salmonella and E. coli are abundant in our meat supply, in part because of the distance that the meat must travel. Meat production is among the most heavily regulated of industries, and yet thousands of people die every year in America from contaminated meat, and the Centers for Disease Control estimate that cases of meat-related food poisoning run into the tens of millions every year.

As legislation and regulation become more centralized, they are more likely to have unexpected consequences. One consequence of the Superfund legislation of the past 30 years has been the abandonment of many industrial areas of cities. As companies leave such areas (perhaps because of the effects of free trade), others refuse to come in, knowing that the federal government may come along at any time and demand that the new owner pay to clean up the previous owner's pollution. Instead, companies do what they have done in Rockford: buy up virgin land that has not been polluted—farmland, for instance—and build their factories and stores. Partly because of this unexpected effect of Superfund legislation, the United States has lost millions of acres of farmland over the past 30 years.

Broadly speaking, law serves two related functions: to codify the moral sense of a community, and to restrain people's impulses (or, more accurately, to punish people who refuse to restrain their impulses). Historically, healthy societies have had relatively few laws. Cultural institutions have acted as a sort of prior restraint on people's actions. It is only when a community begins to dissolve that legislation really multiplies. One could probably track the decline of American society more accurately by graphing the number of laws that Congress has passed in each term than by consulting Bill Bennett's Index of Leading Cultural Indicators.

Today, in an America divided into Red and Blue, there is no real national consensus on any issue—and, frankly, how could there be? The United States is far too large and diverse to be a "village," as Hillary Clinton would like it to be, or a "shining city on a hill," as Ronald Reagan used to call it, borrowing from the Puritans. Consensus, however, is still possible at lower levels. The Rockford City Council or the Winnebago County Board can craft policies that represent the broad consensus of the residents of Rockford or of the county, and they can observe, up close and personal, the results—expected and unexpected—of those policies.

If our hope lies in local action, isn't *Kelo* a step in the right direction? After all, local governments do not have to use the expanded powers that the Supreme Court has granted them. Unfortunately, human nature means that they probably will. As long as local officials can abjure responsibility for their own actions, those with money and influence will provide them with incentives to do so.

What we need is for the U.S. Supreme Court to vindicate the U.S. Constitution by reversing *Kelo* with its own *Hathcock*. Let's hope that it does not take as long to achieve that result as it did in Michigan. While it may be true that decentralized government can only accomplish limited good, history has shown beyond any doubt that highly centralized government can cause almost unlimited destruction.

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Outgrowing the Past

Eminent Domain Down South

by Tom Landess

Melanie Anderson

When the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Kelo* v. *City of New London*, a chill wind blew across the rural South. The Court upheld the decision of the city fathers of New London, Connecticut, to grant a private development corporation the right to condemn a middle-income residential neighborhood, evict the property owners, and construct a marina, high-rise office buildings, and upscale residential housing.

Thoughtful Southerners found *Kelo* particularly disturbing because, in their region, the developer is king—more admired and accommodated than football players or country-music singers. To pig-eyed mayors and councilmen, he is Moses, sent by the gods of getting-and-spending to lead the region out of Egypt. No candidate for local office has ever been elected by saying, "I don't want this place to grow. And if the bigwigs at General Motors try to move their headquarters and production plants down here, they'll do it over my dead body." Big is better. Small is embarrassing.

Mega-cities such as Atlanta and Memphis and Dallas are not the only places where this ideology prevails. You can find it in the most insignificant rural town. Take, for example, Blackville, South Carolina. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in the year 2000, Blackville had a population of 2,973. The Census Bureau estimated the 2004 population at 2,935, a loss of 38 people, or 1.3 percent. However, a website maintained by Blackville realtors insists—against all evidence and reason—that the population is 5,149. It isn't a lie so much as a fond hope.

If you drive through the heart of that town, you will see a weather-ravaged building with a sign that urges tourists to stop and visit "Three Flags Over Blackville." You can be certain that the Devil is sitting inside, leaning back in his swivel chair, picking his teeth.

Over in the next county lies a town buried under coils of blackberry vines, kudzu, pine needles, fallen trees, rotten branches, oaks, and innumerable varieties of weeds. If you go there—and few people are allowed behind the high fences—you can see the remains of curbs, some wide places that used to be driveways, and one or two small bridges. The rest of the town exists only in memory. Today, it is called the Savannah River Nuclear Plant. Once, it was called Ellenton.

In 1951, the U.S. government, using its powers of eminent domain, condemned Ellenton and at least four other communities that lay along the Savannah River—Dunbarton, Meyers Mill, Hawthorne, and Robbins. President Truman announced that the action was taken in the interest of national defense. The word spread quickly: The feds intended to build a plant to manufacture heavy water for use in a hydrogen bomb. The residents of these small communities were stunned.

Most of the families lived on working farms. A few ran businesses: "the Long Store," so named because of its shape; Brinkley's grocery; and the Blue Goose, a tavern, where, for generations, the men had congregated to forget quarrels with their wives, squalling children, and the boll weevil. Most regarded the condemnation as cataclysmic.

Administration spokesmen, and South Carolina politicians, maintained that, far from being a tragedy, the "taking" was actually the best thing that had ever happened to Ellenton. People would be paid handsomely for the land. They would move to nearby cities. They would get better jobs. It was the

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Tom Landess is a retired English professor who has published a number of books and articles, a few of which have appeared under his name.

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same pitch the city of New London made to Susette Kelo.

Newsweek parroted this argument in a brief article on the subject. The reporter and a photographer swooped into town, located the village bum (every town has one) and his female counterpart, posed them in front of an abandoned farmhouse, and presented them to the nation as Ellenton gentry. Readers could see at a glance that these vacant-faced trolls would be much better off in Spartanburg or Greenville, working in a textile mill, making enough money to keep them in Moon Pies for the rest of their days.

The federal appraiser offered $20 per acre for the land and varying amounts for the buildings, some of which were good, sturdy farmhouses, several of which were antebellum showplaces. A case in point: For their spacious, five-bedroom clapboard farmhouse, the Dunbar family was offered $5,000. Combined with 800 acres of farmland—a good portion of it covered with timber almost ready to harvest—they received $21,000, just enough to build a three-bedroom, two-bath house in nearby Barnwell and for Otis Dunbar to buy his wife a half-carat diamond ring, a long-postponed engagement present. It was small compensation for land originally given to William Dunbar by a grateful English king and farmed by his direct descendants until the federal government drove them off.

For decades after they left, the town lived on in the imagination of the dispossessed, lit by memory. But as the years passed, the lights went out one by one, as the older folks died. Today, children who, 50 years ago, were snatched out of one world and plopped into another have grown old and forgetful. They have lost touch with one another and, consequently, with their shared past.

Some anecdotes survive to commemorate that small, irretrievable world. Here are a few: One late-fall evening long, long ago, three great-grandfathers came back from a hunting trip, ready for a hot meal. To warm themselves as they rode along on horseback, they had passed a jug of whiskey back and forth. When they reached the first house, servants told them that children from all three families had contracted bronchitis and that the women were congregated in one house to share the responsibilities of administering aspirin, reading stories, and applying mustard plasters. When the men came to the house much too late, the women and children had gone to bed. Only one gaslight burned feebly in a downstairs parlor. Full of spirits, they rode their horses up the steps and into the hallway. The host dismounted and walked unsteadily into the dining room, where he found a bare table. He peered into the kitchen and saw two pots boiling on the stove. Both contained mustard plasters. Starved, the three tethered their horses on the hall tree, sat down at the kitchen table, and ate the mustard plasters.

No one could have made up that story, and it could never have survived the years in New York or Chicago or even Greenville. Southern literature has its origins in places like Ellenton. In just such a small town, William Faulkner sat on a bench and listened to old-timers swap tales.

Hollywood, terrified of rural America, typically depicts its inhabitants as cruel and insensitive to the suffering of others. Even in the worst of times, people in Ellenton took care of those who needed help, in part because, in a small town, the needy were so easy to identify. Sometimes, it happened quite by accident.

Miss Mary Bush decided that she could no longer carry logs to the house from the woodpile, so she went into the field where her husband, Major, was working with several of the hands and called him aside. She told him she needed a boy to tote wood for her—not a child, but not a grown-up, either. He thought for a minute and then said, "I know just the boy. That fellow that's living with the Ashleys. I'll send somebody to fetch him right now."

An hour or so later, Henry Todd showed up, the trace of a smile on his face. He was around 16 at the time, and he had a strong back. However, when you looked into his dull eyes, you could see he was "slow." He worked hard, however, and he seemed pleased to be there. So, instead of returning him to the Ashleys, with their permission, the Bushes put him in a back room of the huge house, and he stayed with the family for some 60 years.

Everyone in Ellenton knew the Ashleys had been "hiding" him, though no one could say how he got there or precisely when he came. The talk was that they weren't hiding him *from* somebody but *for* somebody, a family that did not want to acknowledge the existence of a retarded member, people with a public reputation to maintain. The Bushes may have extracted the truth from the Ashleys. Or they may have gained crucial knowledge from the boy himself, who was a moron, but not an idiot.

Whatever the means, at some point they learned that Todd was only his middle name. His last name—which his mortified family would not allow him to use—was Lincoln. According to what the Bushes found out, he was the unacknowledged son of Robert Todd Lincoln. Robert was the only child of Abraham Lincoln who lived to adulthood. So Henry Todd was the 16th president's grandson.

After he had lived with the Bushes a while, they made contact with a member of the Lincoln family—Mary Lincoln Beckwith, who was then living at Robert Todd Lincoln's estate house, Hildene, located in Vermont. Mary Beckwith acknowledged the family connection and, from time to time, contributed money toward Henry Todd's keep.

When he reached adulthood, he grew a beard; and his resemblance to his grandfather was striking. He was not tall, but he had the same dark hair, a long, brooding face, and sunken cheeks. People in Ellenton noted the resemblance.

No one called him "Henry," but always "Henry Todd." "Hey Henry Todd, how are you?" "Fine, how are you?" He said little more than that, perhaps because he could not articulate complicated ideas.

Indeed, he never grew up. When one of the Bushes would return from town, a middle-aged Henry Todd would run out to the car to see if they had brought him ice cream. When they had not, he would sit down in the middle of the driveway and weep uncontrollably.

When the federal government ordered them to leave Ellenton, the whole family moved to Walterboro—including Henry Todd. There, they bought a restaurant and a motel, and Henry Todd did a little work for his keep; but by then, he had grown old. Up in his 70's, he walked to town one day, perhaps to get some ice cream, and, in his usual daze, stepped in front of an automobile and was killed instantly.

Thomas Dunbar, who served as magistrate in Ellenton during antebellum times, appointed one of his slaves as his bailiff. Since the slave was illiterate, Judge Dunbar would read him the upcoming docket the night before, and the slave would memorize it and call out the names and cases flawlessly the next day. During Reconstruction, Republicans saw to it that blacks took over many state and municipal offices in South

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Carolina. In Ellenton, the predominantly black legislature appointed Judge Dunbar's bailiff, now a freeman, as magistrate. The new judge immediately appointed his former master as *his* bailiff, and the two served in those roles for a decade, as if nothing much had changed.

A magistrate's court hears cases involving petty theft, the failure to fulfill a contract, simple assault, criminal domestic violence, public intoxication, and any other misdemeanor that carries a penalty of up to 30 days. Such arrangements could not have occurred in a full-blown city, North or South, since they depended not only on an infinitely subtle bond between two men of different races who knew and trusted each other, but on whole-hearted acceptance by the entire community, both white and black. That acceptance could only have come about because people knew precisely with whom they were dealing.

For many years, the all-male Ellenton Agriculture Club had convened once a month at its own two-story wooden clubhouse, where members ate barbecued pork, hash, rice, slaw, potatoes, peas, light bread, and pickles. (The menu was prescribed by the club's constitution.) At these meetings, held every fourth Saturday, attendees heard a 30-minute speech on farming. If the speaker ran over the allotted time, chairs would scrape the floor, and members would begin clearing their throats.

Eminent domain signaled the end of farming for most Ellentonians. Yet they could not completely surrender a way of life they had known for generations. So, to maintain some sense of continuity with their past, members voted to move the clubhouse to Barnwell, where many of them intended to settle. They also moved Ethel, the black woman who prepared the barbecue, and provided her and her family with a place to live and an adequate income.

In Barnwell, they continued to hold monthly meetings, listen to talks on agriculture, and eat barbecued pork, hash, rice, slaw, potatoes, peas, light bread, and pickles. No one ever discovered a penumbra in the constitution that justified serving something new, like Lobster Newberg on rusks. In an ever-changing world, constitutions ought to mean what they say. Out of respect for the long dead, the club still meets every fourth Saturday in Barnwell.

Unlike Atlanta or New London or Blackville, Ellenton never tried to grow. It was content to let nature take care of the population. If, at the end of a year, more citizens were born than died, the population increased slightly. If more folks died than were born, the population decreased slightly. A few people moved away, and a few moved in. The last thing the town worried about was importing industry and growing to the size of Babylon, whose citizens—as Aristotle noted—did not know that they had been conquered for three full days.

Then industry came to Ellenton unbidden, and the town ceased to exist. On former Dunbar land, the nuclear reactor, which today looks as stark and majestic as one of the pyramids, is no longer in operation. It stands like a tombstone over the dead and anonymous dreams of an almost-extinct people.

As an exercise of its sovereignty, the government insisted on moving all the graves that lay inside the condemned area. However, at least one remained and remains to this day—that of William Dunbar, who died in 1735. Though ordered to do so by government officials, his descendants refused to reveal the location of his remains. Today, he lies there in the shade of bearded oaks, blanketed by tall weeds and snarled vines, a lone holdout against America's proud and irresistible impulse to outgrow her own britches. C

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Aristotelian Worms in the Leviathan

Hobbes *Versus* the Human Scale

by Donald W. Livingston

Is there such a thing as the proper size of a political order? Westerners have inherited three visions of political size and scale: the Aristotelian *polis*; the Christian commonwealth; and the Hobbesian modern state. For Aristotle, the point of political order is the cultivation of human excellence. Since virtue cannot be learned except through apprenticeship and emulation—which requires face-to-face knowledge—the polity must be small. Aristotle thought its size should be in scale with the human body and its capacities—something that could be taken in from a hill at a single view or walked across in a single day. This would yield a city-state on the order of 50-200,000 people. Ancient Athens, republican Rome, and Renaissance Florence and Venice—all of which were within this range—were political orders of human excellence from which we still draw inspiration. As Aristotle said, a great city is not necessarily a large one. Indeed, human political order *should be* of this scale unless there are good reasons for it to be more extensive.

Christianity offered those reasons, while at the same time preserving Aristotle's insight into the primacy of human scale in political things. The Christian commonwealth that flourished from the 12th to the 16th century was grounded in Augustine's distinction between the City of God (the Church) and the City of Man. For Aristotle, the institutions that cultivate virtue are contained entirely within the walls of the *polis*. Aristotle had a notion of natural justice, but there was no universal institution in which to cultivate it. Christianity provided such an institution in the form of the Church, Whose scale was and had to be global. But nothing from this followed about the proper size of the secular city. Augustine, however, seems to have accepted Aristotle's insight that the size of the City of Man, like that of a building, should be measured to the scale of the human body and its capacities. Just as the relative size of a window, doorway, or bedroom has not changed over the millennia, so, too, with the City of Man. And this became the case throughout Christendom, where few cities ever reached 100,000, and the vast majority were considerably smaller in size.

Although Christian civilization was vast in extent, there was no central political authority. There were thousands of divided sovereignties and competing jurisdictions displayed on a continental scale. It was not only the Church, with Her vast property holdings, commercial enterprises, and legal system, that was independent of the secular authority; countless secular jurisdictions were independent of one another. Christendom was a rich patchwork of kings, small principalities, dukedoms, margravates, bishoprics, lordly manors, republics, free cities, and leagues of free cities. And running throughout the whole was the universal spiritual institution of the papacy and, in the center of Europe, the light federalism of the Holy Roman Empire.

Christian Europeans necessarily acquired the habit of jealously defining jurisdictions and of limiting political power over corporate entities as well as over individuals. Out of this practice arose the ideals of individual and corporate liberty, the parliamentary system, trial by jury, the rule of law, and the ideal of limited government. Liberty is a gift of medieval Christians; equality—and the massive centralization of power needed to achieve it—is the "gift" of the moderns.

This rich fermentation of competing jurisdictions went on against the background of the Church, which colored the whole with Her teaching that each individual is of infinite worth because made in the image of God. This universal ethic facilitated extensive commercial and cultural activity in a Europe without state borders and, over time, generated the institutions of capitalism whose scale, like that of the Church, was potentially global. The steady growth of wealth in this period (1100-1500) has been called the "miracle of Europe."

It would be tempting to say that the medieval economy of vast scale and the religious authority of global scale were private engagements separate from the secular state. That would be a mistake, however, because there was no such thing as *the state* in Christendom and, consequently, no distinction, such as we have now, between the public and the private—a distinction created by the modern state. What, then, is a modern state, and what is its teaching about size and scale? Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* (1651) gave us the master statement of its philosophical idea. Men without the state are, Hobbes thought, in a condition of anarchy in which anyone can do absolutely anything he likes. The only way to move from this miserable condition to peace and security is for everyone to agree to transfer his unconditioned liberty to a sovereign office that is unconditionally authorized to rule over all.

There are two parts of the Hobbesian notion of government that were unknown to Christendom. One is the notion of political sovereignty—that there must somewhere be located a supreme unconditioned will that has the final say on political matters. No one or office had the final say on political matters in Christendom, since political matters were largely matters of negotiation among property owners. The second is the notion that sovereignty is vested in an artificial corporation with a territorial monopoly on coercion. The office of sovereignty is theorized as distinct from those temporary rulers who occupy it and those ruled by it. This is in marked contrast to both the *polis* of Aristotle and the medieval city. In both cases, government is the *property* of an individual or a group. In the modern state, the instrument of coercion is owned by no one; it is what Hobbes calls an "artificial man."

Contributing editor Donald W. Livingston is a professor of philosophy at Emory University and the president of the Abbeville Institute.

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This is entirely different from Cicero's definition of a republic as an association of *men* under law. The Athens of Aristotle, the republican Rome of Cicero, or the medieval city can be thought of as a large fraternity made up of a federation of smaller fraternities. Privately or severally owned governments of human scale have a built-in monitor for determining proper size. When the number of fraternities or people becomes too large for the management of the jointly owned polity, it is time to form a new city; just as a corporation naturally downsizes or divides and duplicates when it becomes too large for its function.

There is, however, no human-scale standard to limit the size of the modern state. First, the state theorized is large, comprehending millions. Moreover, intimated in this idea is a single global polity, for, if unconditioned centralized power is the solution to the problem of anarchy within the territory of the state, then unconditioned global centralized power is the solution to anarchy among states. Consequently, a modern state can expand, but it cannot divide through secession. Every modern state is "one and indivisible."

We live in a world more or less dominated by Hobbesian states. Today, there is no room for the Aristotelean *polis* or the medieval city because there is no room for government conceived as private or jointly owned property. All such independent social authorities would be potential sources of competition with the sovereign to whom undivided allegiance is owed. Hobbes calls them "worms in the commonwealth," and the sovereign must either destroy them or contain them. Just as Plato excluded the poets from his ideal state, so Hobbes goes out of his way to abolish the literature and public memory of the Greek, Roman, and medieval republican traditions from Leviathan.

Modern political philosophers tell us that the desire to recover the human scale of the *polis* is a childish fantasy. The modern state is not only here to stay but is the final form of political association. If this were true, however, why is it that nearly every modern state presents itself to the world as a *republic* or a *democracy*? The so-called French Republic, the Peoples' Republic of China, and the American republic are not within light years of being either a republic or a democracy. In none of them is the government conceived as a species of property, and they are all wildly out of scale for historic republics and democracies. Yet the disposition to form such polities is so powerful that the modern state has had to appeal to it in legitimating itself. There are, of course, some superficial resemblances (voting, representatives, *etc.*). But the modern state also superficially resembles a village (our state managers speak of the "global village") or a New England town. (President Clinton held town meetings for the United States *via* satellite.)

The images of the village and town meeting are dishonest, Orwellian ways of understanding the modern state, but equally so is the classical image of a republic or democracy. Every modern state has been embarrassed to describe itself as what it actually is: an artificial corporation having a territorial monopoly on coercion distinct from its temporary managers and subjects. Hobbes gave it its true names: an "artificial man" and Leviathan—the latter, taken from a reference in the book of Job to that great sea monster which no man can hook.

Political societies always begin small. Modern states of vast scale are the result of conquest, of crushing hundreds of smaller polities into larger and larger centralized states. A consequence of this out-of-scale centralization is cities of unprecedented size, where millions are herded together. Today, there are ten cities in the world in the range of 20 million population, mostly in the Third World. By 2050, these are predicted to grow to 30-40 million. Two of these monsters would equal the population of the entire Roman Empire at its greatest extent. The reply that the world is more populous today misses the point. Mexico has some 80 million people, a quarter of whom live in smog-choked Mexico City. This concentration of people could not occur if Mexico were divided into, say, ten or more sovereign states of the size of Austria, Switzerland, Denmark, or Norway. The pathological concentration of tens of millions into one urban center is not because of the greater number of people in the world but because of Hobbesian political centralization.

Melanie Anderson

Can the Aristotelean disposition to form polities of human scale be given concrete political expression in a world dominated by Leviathans? One possibility would be secession—breaking large states into smaller ones, as happened when 15 states seceded from the Soviet Union. Until very recently, this seemed impossible, because it violated two Hobbesian maxims: that the state is "indivisible" and that it should be large (and potentially global). When the League of Nations was formed, in the heyday of the nation-state, it was understood that no state could be a member unless it was large. The United Nations today has been compelled to abandon that rule. Over half of the states in the world today have populations of five million or less. More than one third contain a million or less; and nearly one third are 500,000 or less. Fifty-two states have populations of 100,000 or less; and 13 have populations of 10,000 or less. Twenty states occupy an area smaller than Washington, D.C., and one, the Vatican, is smaller than the Washington Mall. Here, again, Christian Europe serves as a model. There were more independent political units in 13th-century Italy, and in 17th-century Germany, than in the world today.

Although secession should be encouraged as a policy option, it does not guarantee that the seceding unit will have the Aristotelean human scale we are looking for. If California seceded, it would have the sixth-largest GNP in the world and would still have the character of Leviathan. To reach the range of an Aristotelean polity, we must consider a different form of secession, one that takes place *within* Leviathan, sapping it of its political strength but also transforming it into something that is less intrusive—and, possibly, that is useful.

Every form of tyranny has an Achilles heel. The disastrous

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experiment with socialist and communist regimes has shown that the modern state cannot flourish without property rights and a market economy. From the late 60's on, there appeared around the globe—cutting across the ideological divisions of left and right—a disposition to privatize. This disposition reached its most dramatic expression in the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union.

One form that this revolution in privatization took in America was the privatization of government in neighborhood associations. This form of local self-government is different from zoning, which employs the coercive power of the state to exclude a certain use of the land in a territory. Jointly owned neighborhood government was created largely by developers responding to market demands. The developer would set up rules for the governance of the territory, and those who bought property in the development signed a covenant to abide by those rules. In the wake of massive intrusions by the Hobbesian state, and its failure to protect valuable ways of life, people began seceding to form something like their own government.

The movement was not planned and had no leaders; it was simply a spontaneous reenactment of the Aristotelian disposition to form polities of human scale. This new instantiation of *government as property* has taken on many forms, ranging from gated communities of the rich, to environmentally minded communities, to communities with a religious tone or a leftist bent, to entire towns. According to Robert Nelson's recent study, *Private Neighborhoods and the Transformation of Local Government*, there are some 250,000 private government associations, housing more than 50 million people. As late as 1970, only one percent of Americans lived in such associations; today, 20 percent do. Nearly 50 percent of all new housing units in major metropolitan areas are in private government associations. They vary in size from a condominium development to an entire town. Reston, Virginia, covers 74,000 acres with a population of over 35,000 and over 500 businesses. Sun City, Arizona, has 46,000 residents and ten shopping centers.

Some see the sudden emergence of these private governments as something new and unexpected. But they are, in fact, a revival of the old. They are, in embryonic form, reenactments of the Aristotelean *polis* and the medieval city—but especially of the latter, which was typically chartered as a business corporation. Indeed, until the late 19th century, American cities were also chartered in the same way, as a business corporation. This ended with the Civil War, which, more or less, transformed America from a federation of states into an Hobbesian unitary state. Just as Lincoln argued that the states had never been sovereign but were mere creatures of the Union, so the federal courts would hold that American cities were mere creatures of the states, and, consequently, creatures of the Union. In *Hunter* v. *City of Pittsburgh* (1907), the Supreme Court made this crystal clear:

> The State . . . at its pleasure may modify or withdraw all [the city's] powers, may take without compensation [the city's] property, hold it itself, or vest it in other agencies, expand or contract the territorial area, unite the whole or a part of it with another municipality, repeal the charter and destroy the corporation. All this may be done, conditionally or unconditionally, with or without the consent of the citizens, or even against their protest. In all these respects the State is supreme, and its legislative body, conforming its action to the state constitution, may do as it will [with the cities] unrestrained by any provision of the Constitution of the United States.

This is a perfect example of the Hobbesian American state seeking to contain the Aristotelean "worms" in Leviathan.

If the American city has no constitutional protection against Leviathan, the same is not true of private property. It is unconstitutional for a state or federal government to take private property without just compensation. And, from this, it seems to follow that a city chartered as a collectively owned business would have a quite different life from one chartered as a mere agent of the state. The former city, being subject to property law, would be immune from civil-rights laws and court decisions regarding speech, religion, affirmative action, *etc.*, since these are applicable only in the public sphere constituted by Leviathan.

The city of such a private government could establish a religion or prohibit all religion. Its public square would be collectively owned and could contain Christian symbols at Christmas, unlike the public square of Leviathan which must, by today's law, remain empty or be filled with a variety of "religious" symbols, all of which must have only a secular meaning. It could discriminate on the basis of age, sex, religion, or ethnicity, and in other ways. It could run businesses or be itself a business. Depending on the terms of its constitution, it could sell a part or the whole of the city off to private owners, or to another city, or to Leviathan. It would resemble the medieval cities that built the great cathedrals, became flourishing centers of commerce and culture, and, in league with other cities, were eventually able to force their will on kings—notably, at the battles of Legnano (1176), Kortrijk (1302), and Morgarten (1315).

There is no reason to think that America could not one day be dotted with a network of flourishing medieval- and Renaissance-type cities rooted in property law, just as she is dotted with a network of flourishing business corporations rooted in property law. The legal framework that distinguishes constitutionally between private and public, as well as the spectacular growth of private government associations, leave the political door open to this prospect. What largely prevents it is a lack of political imagination. Americans are creatures of the Hobbesian state and, through long training and habit, have acquired something of the timid character of Hobbesian subjects. And they still feel an allegiance to the 19th-century nationalism that emerged from the Civil War (but which did not exist before it) and which today no longer makes sense. Bill Clinton, in a speech, told Americans of European descent that they must get used to the idea of becoming a minority—and that this was a good thing; the Supreme Court has started incorporating E.U. law and international treaties into American case law; Congress will not enforce U.S. immigration law. A regime that delegitimates its founding culture, whose constitution is shaped by foreigners, and that will not control its own borders can no longer be called a country.

The elites that manage the Hobbesian American state are increasingly shifting *their* allegiance to supranational and stateless organizations. Ordinary Americans do not understand this, but if it ever sinks in, their allegiance to post-Lincolnian nationalism will begin to fade. They will then have a reason to turn to what is near and dear as the main focus of civic loyalty. That would not, of course, preclude weaker loyalties to

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the overarching state authorities that survived; the citizens of medieval cities had multiple allegiances. But the kind of allegiance demanded by the "one and indivisible" Hobbesian nation-state would no longer exist. The "worms" in Leviathan would have gained legitimacy in what would now be recognized as an entirely different kind of political order.

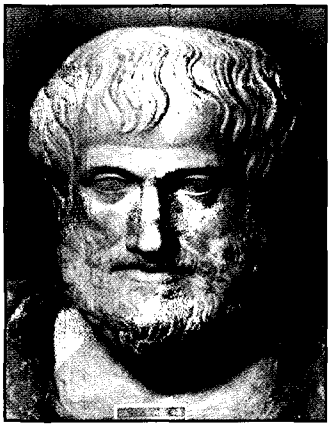
I said that the legal door seems open to a revival of polities of human scale. That door, however, could be closed. The courts could declare private governments to be "state actors," as was done to municipal governments in the late-19th century. And, of course, the disposition of the Hobbesian state is to do just that. But the rapid and spontaneous rise of the private-government movement suggests that it will not be easy to roll back. Americans have a deep commitment to property rights and localism, and, though both have eroded, they are still solidly framed in our legal tradition and could be strengthened incrementally by astute and persistent political action. In the end, judges are camp followers of victorious political forces.

Chief Justice Warren Burger wrote in 1980 that "a community of people are—within limits—masters of their own environment. . . . Citizens should be free to choose to shape their community so it embodies their conception of the 'decent life.'" The question is, what are the limits? In a 1992 opinion, Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy declared that, if something "is a product not of state action but of private choices, it does not have constitutional implications." If so, then private governments, being the product of private choices, should not be subject to the constitutional constraints that apply to "state actors," such as cities.

Whether the courts draw this conclusion and apply it will depend, in large part, on what political action the people undertake in this contested field. The rapid rise of private government has caught the state and the courts unaware. Robert Nelson, in the book mentioned above, has explored the confused and contradictory decisions of both state courts and the Supreme Court on whether neighborhood associations are "state actors." He points out, for instance, that the Davis-Stirling Act, passed in California to regulate the activities of neighborhood associations, has been changed 35 times since it was first enacted in 1985. The matter is unsettled.

Since each state can make its own laws in this matter, and since there are 50 states, it is possible that some states will be more tolerant in allowing private governments to emerge. The same was true in the Middle Ages, where towns had to negotiate with the count or prince who chartered them. They acquired their liberty incrementally, over time.

But should people continue to secede, emotionally and spiritually, from the American Hobbesian state; and should they begin to put their political and economic energy into building political societies in the pattern of the *polis* and the medieval city; and should a few of these succeed and become flourishing centers of wealth and culture, they would inspire emulation. And, at that point, the state would find it hard to destroy them. So the question remains whether Americans are content to remain timid Hobbesian subjects, or whether they have the civic virtue and political imagination to revive the polities of human scale they enjoyed before the Civil War and to pursue the prospect that has been opened up, legally and politically, by the private-government movement of the past 35 years. <c



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Small Is Beautiful *Versus* Big Is Best

E.F. Schumacher and True Conservatism

by Joseph Pearce

The phrase "Small is beautiful" was coined, or at least popularized, by the economist E.F. Schumacher, who chose it for the title of his ground-breaking international best-seller, published in 1973, that exploded like a beneficent bomb, demolishing, or at least throwing into serious question, many of the presumptions of *laissez-faire* economics. The subtitle of Schumacher's book, "A Study of Economics as if People Mattered," reflects his insistence that the question of scale in economic life should not—and, indeed, morally speaking, cannot—be separated from the overriding dignity of the human person. The tendency of modern economics to genuflect before Mammon in the name of quasimysterious market forces, and to disregard the dignity of the human person, is ultimately not an economic but a moral question. As such, we should not be surprised that the whole issue has concerned the Catholic Church for more than a century.

Perhaps Schumacher's lasting legacy is to illustrate that subsidiarity, the essence of the Church's social teaching as expounded in social encyclicals by popes such as Leo XIII, Pius XI, and John Paul II, and as defined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, has worldwide popular appeal and, more significantly, is a practical and viable alternative to *laissez-faire* concepts of economics.

Schumacher warned of impending calamity if rampant consumerism and economic expansionism were not checked by human and environmental considerations. Like a latter-day prophet, he asserted that humanity was lurching blindly in the wrong direction, that the pursuit of wealth could not ultimately lead to happiness or fulfillment, that the pillaging of finite resources and the pollution of the planet constituted a threat to global ecological and economic stability, and that a renewal of moral and spiritual perception was essential if disaster was to be avoided. His greatest achievement was the fusion of ancient wisdom and modern economics in a language that encapsulated contemporary doubts and fears about the industrialized world. He confronted the presumptions of modernity with the dynamism of tradition. He stressed that the wisdom of the ages, the perennial truth that has guided man throughout history, serves as a constant reminder to each new generation of the dangers of self-gratification. The lessons of the past, if heeded, should always empower the present.

In practical terms, Schumacher counteracted the idolatry of giantism with the beauty of smallness. People, he argued, can only feel at home in human-scale environments. If structures—economic, political, or social—grow too large, they become impersonal and unresponsive to human needs and aspirations. Under these conditions, individuals feel functionally futile, dispossessed, voiceless, powerless, excluded, and alienated. He applied similar criteria with regard to technolatry, the idolization of technology. He wrote that modern technology often pursues size, speed, novelty, and violence in defiance of all laws of natural harmony. The machine was becoming master and not the servant of man, severing him from his natural environment and encasing him in an increasingly artificial world. Since Schumacher's time, this process has accelerated. Reality is being systematically replaced by virtual reality. How can mankind address the urgent problems confronting the real world when it is being simultaneously stimulated and stupefied by electronic fantasies? As techno-man plugs himself into the latest electronic illusions, he simultaneously disconnects himself from the real world and its very real problems.

The harsh reality, unheeded by those hooked on fantasy, is that the ecological "bottom line"—conservation of limited resources—is not compatible with the economic "bottom line": consumer-driven expansionism without limit. The fact is that the globalist's dream is the realist's nightmare. As Schumacher observed: "Modern man does not experience himself as a part of nature but as an outside force destined to dominate and conquer it. He even tells of a battle with nature, forgetting that, if he won the battle, he would find himself on the losing side." We were given authority over nature as stewards of the goodness she has to offer, not as locusts devouring what we have no intention of replenishing. The moral is easy enough to discern for those who have ears to hear: Ultimately, small is beautiful because the earth herself is not only beautiful but small.

Isn't this a little alarmist? Wasn't Schumacher overstating the case? Certainly, many conventional economists would have us believe so. When it comes to explaining, or explaining away, the possible problems confronting a blind faith in *laissez-faire* economics, these apologists for continual economic expansion are the proverbial eternal optimists. This touching optimism is attributable to what might be called the Micawber Factor, in honor of Dickens' endearingly feckless character who believed that "something will turn up." Few, however, would suggest that Mr. Micawber's wilfully extravagant and futile short-sightedness offers a model of sound economic living. On the contrary, isn't it merely prudent to be conservative in our approach to conserving resources that might be in short supply? And, similarly, isn't it prudent to assume that pollution might be a contributor to global warming until irrefutable evidence is provided to the contrary? Aren't those so-called conservatives who urge that we throw caution to the wind being somewhat less than conservative in the practice of their beliefs? In truth, what might be termed the Theoretical Virtues of economic orthodoxy—faith in the hidden hand of market forces, hope that "something will turn up," and love of economic growth—are all inimical to conservatism, truly conceived.

Joseph Pearce's Small Is Still Beautiful *will be published by ISI Books in Fall 2006.*

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What, then, is conservatism, truly conceived, and how does it diverge from *laissez-faire* economics? On a purely political level—and conservatism, truly conceived, can never subsist solely on the purely political level—it might be said that Edmund Burke is the original conservative. Burke analyzed the anarchy of the French Revolution and wrote a devastating critique of the destructive forces unleashed by that debacle. "Liberty," he wrote, "must be limited in order to be possessed." This is the paradox at the heart of human life—and, therefore, at the heart of economics—that is ignored by *laissez-faire* libertarians. In reality, these libertarians are economic anarchists who say that nothing must restrict the liberty of market forces. In exactly the same way that political anarchists believe that a perfect world would be ushered in by the removal of all government and all law, these economic anarchists believe that a better world will be ushered in by the removal of all efforts to limit the liberty of the hidden hand of the free market. Yet why should we believe that this mysterious "hidden hand" is always and infallibly beneficial? On what authority should we place such faith in this mystery? What did Christ have to say on the subject? Did He command us to genuflect before the Almighty Market? Not exactly. His two greatest commandments are that we love the Lord our God with all our heart, and that we love our neighbor as ourselves. Commandments are not options. What happens if and when there is a conflict between these commandments and the worship of the free market? In such cases, which should prevail? What if the free market should dictate that sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll are the most profitable sectors of the economy? Prostitution and pedophilia are both highly profitable areas and, no doubt, would be even more so if the hidden hand of the market were not thwarted by the prudishness of Christian morality enshrined in law to protect women and children. Clearly, in such circumstances, prudishness is simply prudence, and the freedom of the market, merely madness.

The absence of what might be termed a "soul" in economics, its unremitting materialism, leads to the assumption that all of mankind's problems can be solved by the attainment of universal material prosperity. The road to riches is the road to happiness. This dominant modern belief is particularly alluring, because it suggests that the faster you get one desirable thing, the more surely you attain another. It has the added attraction of being devoid of any ethical constraints, such as the need for self-sacrifice. On the contrary, the more we try to enrich ourselves, the happier we shall be. The materialist mantra is "Get Rich, Be Happy." Once this golden rule is accepted, the only problem confronting humanity is an economic and technological one: How do we make everybody richer so that everybody can be happier?

Gandhi spoke disparagingly about "dreaming of systems so perfect that no one will need to be good." Yet the golden rule just cited does not mention being good, for that is irrelevant. On the contrary, if goodness is an obstacle to happiness, it is to be shunned. The name of the game is self-gratification, not self-sacrifice. And this raises an interesting question. At what point will people decide that they are rich enough to be happy? Indeed, what exactly is "enough"? Conventional economics, obsessed with perpetual growth, has no concept of "enough." The keyword is not *enough* but *more*. And, although there are poor societies that have too little, there are no rich societies saying that they have enough, let alone that they have too much.

This prompts another question: Can a society be called "happy," however materially affluent, if it always wants more? Clearly, the answer is no. It is not satisfied—a word whose Latin root, *satis*, means "enough." It can be seen, therefore, that the "Get Rich, Be Happy" mantra is a futile hymn to a false god. It is neither satisfying in practice nor satisfactory in principle. In fact, a more appropriate hymn for the restlessly rich countries of the world would be the Rolling Stones anthem, "I Can't Get No Satisfaction."

Ultimately, conventional economists are making the perennially fatal mistake of ignoring the metaphysical truths that underpin physical facts. They forget that greed is a metaphysical reality and is, therefore, unlimited. Greed is larger than the world and may, if unchecked, outstrip the world's ability to meet its demands. As Gandhi said, "Earth provides enough for every man's need, but not every man's greed." Or, as Alexander Solzhenitsyn put it, "Man has set for himself the goal of conquering the world but in the process loses his soul." And Solzhenitsyn's words are, of course, a variation on the words of Jesus Christ: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Such is the folly of Economic Man, who is set to lose his soul *and* the world, poisoning the one with greed and the other with the pillage and pollution it causes.

The solution is to replace the soulless economics—which knows the price of everything and the value of nothing—with an economics with soul, an economics "as if people mattered." As Pope Pius XII put it, "The wound of our individualistic and materialistic society will not be healed, the deep chasm will not be bridged, by no matter what system, if the system itself is materialistic in principle and mechanical in practice."

Burdened by materialism and mechanism, man has enslaved himself to the rule of the Giants. In economics, multinational corporations rule the roost, assisted by such international financial institutions as the IMF and the World Bank. Small businesses struggle to survive in a system weighted unfairly in the direction of the Giants. In politics, power continues to be centralized into larger and larger entities that are further and further removed from the needs and aspirations of ordinary people and families. In the United States, Congress and the Supreme Court erode the power of the individual states; in Europe, the essentially undemocratic European Union continues to swallow up smaller sovereign states with its voraciously secular appetite. Everywhere, the small and the beautiful are being threatened by the big and the ugly. Small business is threatened by big business; small government, by big government.

"To the size of states there is a limit as there is to other things, plants, animals, implements; for none of these retain their natural power when they are too large or too small, but they either wholly lose their nature or are spoilt." Thus wrote Aristotle, and, as Schumacher commented, "it's hard to equal the language of the ancients" when dealing with these fundamental problems of life. Then, echoing Aristotle's ancient wisdom, Schumacher reiterated his belief that "the question of the proper scale of things" is "the most neglected subject in modern society." This, of course, is at the center of the Catholic Church's teaching on subsidiarity—a teaching rooted in the belief that power should be devolved upward from the family, not imposed downward by impersonal centralized power.

Perhaps G.K. Chesterton summed up the whole matter best: "That which is large enough for the rich to covet," he wrote, "is large enough for the poor to defend." Let this be a rallying cry for all true conservatives. c

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A Day With Cyprien

by Catharine Savage Brosman

Cyprien has been on my mind since last week, when I put on again the blue Daum earrings that I brought back from Paris a few years ago. I hesitate to wear them when I am going out, although they don't seem loose, and the hooks are not flimsy. What makes me nervous is just the thought of having more than $100 worth of an artisan's work in glass dangling from my ear lobes, as I walk on the sidewalk or get into the streetcar. Nevertheless, I wore them to a wedding last week in the French Quarter, since they are such a perfect match for the blue garden-party dress I had chosen, and since the wedding was that of John Howard, a former student of mine who truly is steeped in French art.

I bought the earrings because of Cyprien, but not *for* him, as a coquettish woman might buy something to please a man. That summer, I was in France for a few weeks. He had come up to Paris just for a day, especially to see me, from Bordeaux, where he is one of the museum curators. It was the first time I had seen him since the 1960's—thirty years or so. You could call it a reunion, but perhaps it was more a coda to the music of the past, the old phrases replayed briefly, in a different key. Not that the past had been dramatic; we had been friends, with just a bit of romance thrown in, of the passing sort that flavors a friendship between a man and a woman without changing it into something harder to manage. I suppose, had things been different, that it could have been transformed into love. The instruments for our approaching sentimental coda were ourselves, considerably aged; as the date of our meeting approached, I did not know whether the effect of time should be counted as mellowing or destructive, or perhaps some of both . . .

His full name is Jean-Luc-André-Cyprien Cazenave. Born on Saint Cyprien's Day, he received that name along with those of his father and a grandfather, and it was that one which stuck. His father's family was from Bayonne, where he was born; his mother was a Spanish immigrant who ended up working as a chambermaid in resort hotels in Biarritz and later in Bordeaux. She was probably a very intelligent woman, though her schooling had not advanced far; Cyprien was, I thought, brilliant as well as a very good painter. Social mobility was so limited in Europe, for so long, that circumstances weighed heavily on a person's chances. His mother was, after all, a foreigner, a sort of *Gastarbeiter,* from a relatively poor and politically retrogressive country; France had looked good to her, but, without family connections or any higher education, she could not hope to go far. She was very pious, in the typically Spanish way. Cyprien's father, a teacher, was the opposite, a freethinker and left-winger—a communist, I had suspected, though Cyprien had never admitted it to me, fearing, I suppose, an American's knee-jerk negative reaction to the very word. Having a free-thinking father and a devout mother is so common in France that it scarcely needs comment; in many communities, few men go to Mass. But theirs appeared to be an extreme case. At any rate, Cyprien's father died, in circumstances unclear to me, toward the end of the German occupation; quite how, I'm not sure, but I know now that he was involved with a communist Resistance network. As a boy, Cyprien received help for his schooling from his father's family and thus was able to finish the *lycée* and go to Paris to study at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts; he also had some help from an association of former members of the Resistance.

We had first gotten acquainted, long ago, at a café right near the Ecole, and learned that we would be students there together. I remember that I was seated by myself, with a coffee cup long emptied. From his table, he had examined me, looking doubtless like the foreigner I was, but obviously an artist, since I had a large portfolio with me. He had nodded slightly, then spoke, using the all-purpose student greeting, "*Salut.*" After a pause, he added: "Would you like to come join us?" He gestured to his friends: Christine, André, Claire, Philippe, Marie-Hélène, and so on. We shook hands all around. That was my introduction to the little band of fellow students who remained the center of my social life throughout my year's study in Paris. Thinking about it after three decades and walking along the Boulevard Saint-Germain and the rue de Seine to the art quarter to meet Cyprien again brought back details as though I had returned to the stage set of my past.

We had decided to meet again in the same neighborhood, but we would do things more elegantly this time. We would have lunch in the handsome dining room of L'Hôtel—that is its full name—where Colette had lived and Oscar Wilde had died, in the rue des Beaux-Arts. Then, we would go to the Musée Nissim de Camondo, which I had never visited, on the Right Bank near the Parc Monceau—a collection of eighteenth-century furniture, *objets d'art,* and paintings in a handsome townhouse that a rich collector gave to the nation as a memorial to his son, killed in the Great War. Cyprien's curatorial responsibilities in Bordeaux cover a vast area, but his scholarly speciality is eighteenth-century art—porcelain, *faïence,* furniture, bibelots, paintings. That was how I had discovered him again, after years when we had lost track of each other and neither had any idea what the other was doing: In an art-history magazine, I had come across an article signed Cyprien Cazenave, concerning some of the everyday objects in Chardin's still lifes, and had written to him at his museum address in Bordeaux. Subsequently, I had informed him about my forthcoming stay in Paris, and we had decided to meet.

Catharine Savage Brosman, professor emerita of French at Tulane University and honorary research professor at the University of Sheffield, has published numerous works of poetry and prose, including The Muscled Truce *(LSU Press).*

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Having a few extra minutes, I walked rather slowly—on the very narrow sidewalks of those old streets near the Seine, crowded at midday, you can't make fast progress anyhow, especially near the open market stalls—and I cast a leisurely glance or so at the windows of the antique shops and art dealers. I was looking at some engravings of ships when I sensed someone at my elbow. "Pardon," a voice said, "might you be Harriett D'Aquin—I mean my friend Harry?"—the name pronounced *Arree*, of course, as a Frenchman would say it; we had always used French together, his English being halting. "It's really you?"

I turned quickly. "Yes, Cyprien, it's I." We shook hands, in the French manner. "I was going to wait for you in the lobby of L'Hôtel, where you would have guessed that I was the gray-haired woman in the green jacket. How did you recognize me here on the street, after all these years?"

"Ah, *Arree*, I couldn't have missed you. How many women in the rue de Seine have your style—your very *American* French style? You are as charming as ever—the same tilt to the chin, the same eyes. Those eyes! How good it is to see you!" (He used *vous*, of course, as I had in writing to him—the familiar *tu* of distant student days replaced by suitably professional address.)

"Oh, Cyprien, it is grand to see you, too. Such a long time it's been since we were students here! And you are still the dear flatterer. Come, let's go have a drink and lunch." And off we went, turning into the rue des Beaux-Arts, finding the right number, and making our way to the rear of the dining room, where a table was set up for us near the fountain. He ordered a *kir royal* for each of us—"You would enjoy that, wouldn't you?" Signaling clearly to the *maître d'hôtel* that this would be a leisurely meal, we laid aside for a while the menus that had been thrust into our hands. Time to talk, it was; we would oblige time to give us back a bit of what it had taken. And what it had taken was, I acknowledged, all too obvious, despite the cordial greeting, the display of Gallic charm: Cyprien could not have missed noticing the changes in me, and what I saw was an ascetic-looking man of "a certain age," as the French say, *bel homme* but a bit stooped in the shoulders and thin-chested, with a thatch of white hair and thick lenses, his forehead deeply lined, his skin stretched taut over prominent cheekbones.

Where does one begin, at a retrospective? He inquired about my life and my work, of course, following up on the bare sketch I had given in my letter, so I filled it in briefly: my return to New York after Beaux-Arts, getting my degree, my struggle to paint and get my works shown, my first curatorial positions, then my settling in New Orleans and marriage to Jack. He told me more about his position in Bordeaux, where he had ended up, some years after finishing not only Beaux-Arts but also the prestigious Ecole du Louvre.

"And your painting? You still paint, surely; you were one of the most gifted, Cyprien, much more than I." Looking at his stretched, yet lined, face, I thought of the masks that some great painters acquired over their features—the masks of their true selves, exteriorized and molded to their face by an intense identification with their art.

"*Arree*, I must tell you the truth: I have not painted for many years. My painting is still . . . latent, as it were. Only recently I have thought that I might . . . " The words trailed off.

His admission fell like a stone onto the table. We had finished our *kirs* by then. The waiter, sensing a pause, came over to enquire about another *apéritif*.

"No, thank you," Cyprien replied, "but please bring the wine list, and now we will look at the menu and order." He changed his glasses, putting on a pair of small reading spectacles.

We chose according to taste, and according to our ideas of what such a luncheon should be: I had snails *provençal*, followed by a Basque paella in honor of Cyprien's home region, while he ordered prosciutto with melon—it looks so lovely on the plate, like a small Chardin painting—and Dover sole, the latter, perhaps, an oblique homage to Wilde. He selected a dry white Bordeaux to accompany the meal. As we ate and drank, we wove a conversation composed of bits of information on ourselves mixed with comments on the food and wine, reiterated exclamations on the time that had passed, and some news, which he shared with me, of our fellow students, now scattered around Europe.

"Cyprien," I ventured shortly before the plates were cleared away and the dessert menu was announced, "please tell me why you gave up painting—you must tell me what happened." There are dozens of questions that, out of politeness, I would refrain from asking, but to remain silent on what he had cared about so deeply, at one time, would have betrayed old friendship and commitment to what we had been. Anyhow, artists can be like that—mercilessly probing a wound or a rip in the vision, reaching for the hidden springs of creativity or the source of paralysis, in themselves and others. I knew why *I* had left the brushes alone for quite a few years; but then, I am a woman. I now imagined the worst—some critic's column having devastated him so that his creativity was paralyzed, perhaps a vow he had made to the Virgin (I remembered his mother's piety) in exchange for the cure of a sick child, or an obscure mental or physical disease that gnawed him from the inside and took away the inner vision.

"You remember Corinne Lapeyre." Indeed I did. She was from Bayonne and went to the university in Bordeaux while Cyprien was in Paris at Beaux-Arts. After I had known him for some months, she came to visit for a few days; I understood that their relationship was not the same as ours. He told me then that he would marry her when his studies were over—that he had loved her for years, and that was why he couldn't quite love me.

"Of course I remember Corinne. You did get married, didn't you?"

No, they had not. He paused, then began to explain what had happened. She came from a conservative upper-bourgeois fam-

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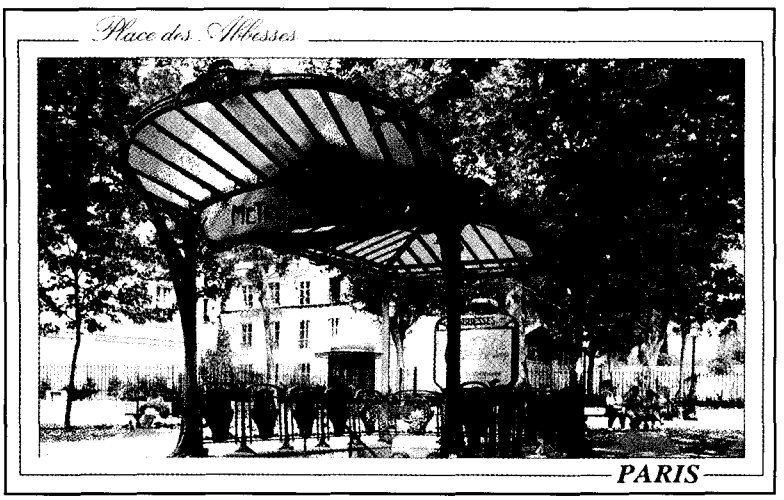
ily, very right-wing, which all along had viewed the youthful romance with disfavor, in light of Cyprien's origins—his mother, an immigrant of the working class; his father, an intellectual, a radical, perhaps worse. Her parents objected also, he told me, to the fact that he was an artist: Among proper families, the old stigma against pursuing literature, the stage, music, or art as anything but a pastime had not disappeared. It is true that, in the 1960's, even conservative French parents did not often presume to forbid outright such a marriage, and they had to acknowledge, he added, that, by going to the Ecole du Louvre, Cyprien was preparing himself, officially, for a career in the national museum system, thus a stable and respectable position.



"But they made inquiries."

"What sort of inquiries do you mean? Into your finances? Your exam results? Your circle of friends?" I could not imagine what he meant—his own finances amounted to nothing then, and they knew it, and French examination results are public. Did they think he was a fraud, claiming to be a student, living instead a life of dissipation in Paris on who knows what unsavory means?

"They . . . *Arree*, they . . . inquired into my father's activities during the war. You know, I never told you; all that was too close to me then, too fragile—since my memory of him was all I had and I didn't want to touch it—and you might not have understood how it was possible for someone . . . " He paused, then resumed. "Anyway, my father was a communist, in the *maquis* in the Southwest. After the landings in 1944, as the liberation troops moved closer to Bordeaux, he and some other *maquisards* began their program of clearing out some of the worst of the collaborators in the Gironde—factory owners who had profited obscenely from furnishing goods to the Germans, and actively collaborationist mayors and other officials. Those were terrorist operations. For years, I had known he had done things of that sort—my mother told me. But I didn't know exactly what actions he took part in. M. and Mme. Lapeyre, at any rate, had ways of finding things out and learned that my father had been in one of those Resistance cells that didn't wait for official justice."

"But, Cyprien . . . " My impulse was to say that, by the mid-1960's, that was water under the bridge; but, of course, it was not true and still isn't true for those whose families were closely involved in what, toward the end of the Occupation, had turned into a civil war.

"That's not the worst of it, anyhow. They found out—or at least claimed so to Corinne—that my father was one of those who assassinated the mayor of Castelfort. He was Corinne's uncle."

His voice had fallen, and he looked down, as though dismayed all over again. By then, we had ordered sorbets of black currant and lemon, and, as he spoke, I had taken small spoonfuls of mine, letting the cold sweetness dissolve in my mouth. "My poor Cyprien," I murmured.

He went on to explain that M. and Mme. Lapeyre had then forbidden absolutely that he and Corinne see each other. Corinne herself had written to break the engagement. "It is better this way," she had added.

He was, he said, devastated. Paris, Beaux-Arts, and the Ecole du Louvre had been for him not only a threshold to a career but a way of earning Corinne. Nevertheless, he took his competitive examinations, one after the other, and got a position as a curator in a very small provincial museum, before he moved to Bordeaux, where he was happy to remain. She married someone "from her world," as he put it. He had never married (and I reflected how that helped explain the long, severe, almost ascetic face, which had not smiled over a child nor been rejuvenated by seeing itself renewed in a grown son). He had not stopped painting immediately; rather, for a while, he had thrown himself into his studio work, seeking release or oblivion. "But unhappiness did not help me to paint; I don't know how to make art out of anger and pain—not from that kind of raw hurt, anyway. It paralyzed me."

Luncheon was over, and the sorbet dishes had been cleared away. We drank our coffee without dallying too much. Two hours or so had passed; we needed to get on to the museum. It was sunny and almost hot in the streets; Cyprien put on his dark glasses. We walked to the *métro*. To get to the Monceau neighborhood, it would have been possible to choose an itinerary allowing us to change trains only once; but Cyprien—whether because he was upset from having told the Corinne story, or because he had really lost the art of being a Parisian—got out one of those booklets that show the subway lines and every section of the city and decided on another route, with two changes. I could have advised him but didn't wish to. After waiting on three different platforms, we finally emerged at Villiers and started along the rue Monceau toward the museum. Suddenly, he stopped me, saying, "Let me look at the map again." He fumbled in his pockets, got out the *métro* booklet, then reached in his shirt pocket for his reading glasses. They weren't there. "I must have put them in my jacket pocket." He fumbled again and pulled out a pair—but they were obviously not the right ones, for they had oversized tortoise-shell frames.

"Cyprien, how many pairs of glasses do you have with you?"

"Four," he admitted, "counting these sunglasses." He continued searching in his pockets—jacket, shirt, even trousers pockets; finally, he had to acknowledge that the reading glasses were missing, though the slim leather case was in a coat pocket. He looked panic-stricken.

"You must have left them in the restaurant."

We found a street telephone back at the Villiers intersection, and he called. Next to him, I could half hear the answer through the receiver: "No, Monsieur, no one found any eyeglasses on the table when you left. But we shall look again."

Cyprien whispered to me, "He's sending a waiter back to

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look." But no glasses could be discovered anywhere.

"Do you suppose you dropped them in the *métro*? Did you take them out to look at the map on the platform or in the train?"

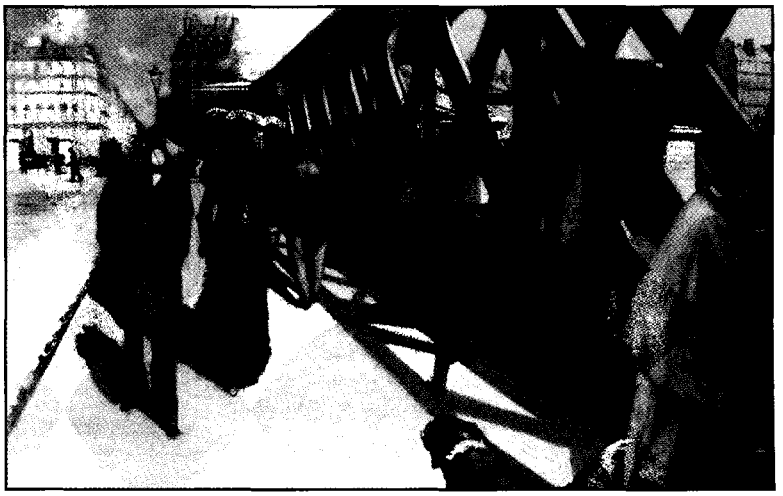
He could not remember, but it was plausible. So we went down the steps to the ticket booth. Villiers is a large station, and it was quite crowded; he had to wait in line to report the loss. He said afterward that it had been necessary to list the three different lines we had taken to get to Villiers and the station where we had begun the trip, as well as describe the glasses and give the name of his Paris hotel and his Bordeaux address. He had been told to call the Lost and Found later in the afternoon.

He fretted as we turned up the stairs to the intersection and once again started for the museum. "They were a new prescription, you know. And I cannot read without them." Nevertheless, he seemed determined to act as a good guide and attempted to be cheerful, once we had gotten our tickets and were walking around the spacious salons of the house, which displayed paintings by Hubert Robert and Guardi and the very finest of eighteenth-century furniture and art objects. His knowledge was detailed and dazzling. "That piece of *marqueterie* is from the 1750's," he would say; or, "That cabinet was made by Riesener; that splendid example of *orfèvrerie*, by Roettiers." He was especially good with porcelain and *faïence*, identifying pieces by their region and workshop simply by a glance (he was wearing by this time yet another pair of spectacles—designed especially, I supposed, for viewing art displays). Our visit was thorough; it's the sort of museum you do in a couple of hours, and few other visitors were there to interfere with our movement and examination of the collections. But I could see how preoccupied he was still.

When we left, the afternoon was drawing on. We had already planned to have an *apéritif* somewhere before we said goodbye at the end of the day; I was obliged, unfortunately, to attend a semiofficial banquet at eight. I was staying, that summer, on the Right Bank near the Louvre; it was decided that we would go back and stop at a café in that neighborhood. We walked toward the Villiers *métro*, talking about the collections. Though I had been looking at Cyprien, I happened to turn and cast a glance toward the street. Prominently propped on the hood of a car was a pair of eyeglasses, of the reading sort. "Cyprien! Look! Might those be your glasses? There, on the car!"

He turned quickly and, after the moment required for him to grasp what I meant, ran toward the car. There they were, not crushed, not bent, waiting for their owner. Earlier, he must have gotten them out absent-mindedly and then dropped them at the very moment he had stopped to look at the map; then a stranger, considerate but probably in haste, had seen them and propped them on the car hood. Cyprien almost wept with relief. "Oh, *Arree*! It's wonderful." Feverishly, he put them in the empty case. I embraced him—the sort of thing I don't do much with anyone, and particularly not on a Paris street. "You know," he said, almost embarrassed, "I had said a little prayer to Saint Anthony." I thought of his Spanish mother; whatever other views Cyprien might have on the world, including, possibly, his father's radicalism and surely his own aesthetic vision, which constituted, perhaps, the most important lens of all, those views had not overcome entirely a faith he must have learned from her.

We continued walking down to the intersection; Cyprien was beaming. In the *métro* station, he went to make another report, saying that the lost glasses had been found. I don't know whether he told the clerk he'd picked them up on the street; if so, she probably didn't believe him, concluding that they'd been in his pocket all along. We rode to the Palais-Royal station, near my hotel. In the huge square and the rue de Rivoli, the stores were still open. "Let's go look a minute in the shops over there," Cyprien suggested, his high spirits showing in his step and voice and easing a bit the lines of his face. We passed by the Daum shop windows and, drawn by the pure colors and graceful designs, went in. He looked at the glass birds and vases; I was drawn to the earrings. In the euphoria of the found eyeglasses, I felt the strong need to make a gesture—a sort of offering in acknowledgment of the way Fate, or Providence, had taken care of Cyprien this time, and so often takes care of us all. To acquire something beautiful by which to remember the day and the friendship it celebrated seemed fitting; I chose a pair of eardrops of a frosted blue.



With my purchase in hand, in a white box, tied with ribbon, we went over to the place André Malraux and sat down at the Royal. Cyprien had not bought anything *chez* Daum, but he, too, felt the need to mark the end of our day as extraordinary. He ordered champagne, and, in the long, almost motionless cocktail hour—not twilight, since night would not fall for a good three hours or more—we sat, as intoxicated with pleasure as by the wine, studying obliquely the nuances of pale and darker blue in the sky, watching the passers-by, with the fountain and leafy chestnut trees and theater in the corner of our eye, and the time we had spent together already slipping into the past, in a mellow way. It was drawing on toward eight; soon, I would have to say goodbye, run back to the hotel, and then leave for the banquet. I hoped that Corinne had vanished from Cyprien's thoughts, to which my questions had summoned her, and that, perhaps, when he returned to Bordeaux, he would find it easier to take up again the painting that had helped make us friends. I could imagine him in his studio, getting out his brushes and a clean canvas, telling himself that it was time to start afresh, under the good geniuses of friendship, beauty, and the reconciliation that comes with time—and watched over by some angel with great wings, who would see the masses of blue and green taking shape on the easel and think, "Yes, those are the skies and trees of a Paris afternoon, when you were happy again." c

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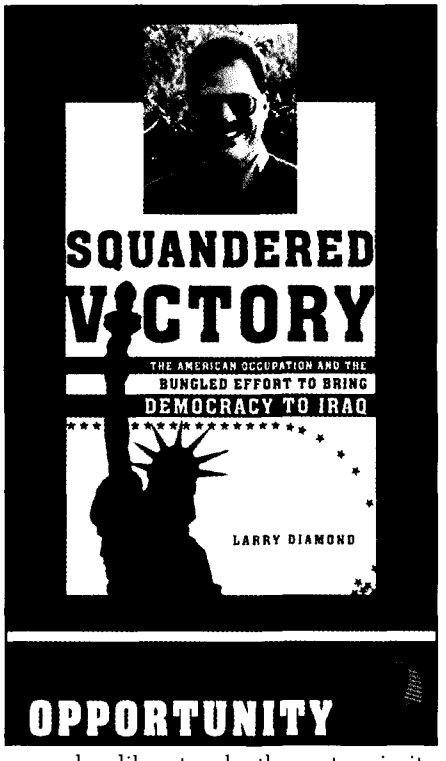
Learning At the Periphery

by Ted Galen Carpenter

"Soldiers are the only hope against democrats."
—Wilhelm von Merckel

Squandered Victory: The American Occupation and the Bungled Effort to Bring Democracy to Iraq
by Larry Diamond
New York: Times Books/Henry Holt & Company; 384 pp., $25.00



The Bush administration's crusade to overthrow Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein and build Iraq into a democratic model for the Middle East has become a highly controversial and divisive undertaking. Larry Diamond was not a supporter of the war in Iraq, but when his old friend Condoleezza Rice, then President Bush's national-security advisor, asked him to go to Iraq as a democracy-development specialist, he agreed. From January to April 2004, he served as a senior advisor to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad. It proved to be an enormously frustrating experience, as he encountered a military occupation and a political democratization mission riddled with miscalculations and outright bungling.

As an examination of the blunders made by the U.S. occupation authorities, *Squandered Victory* is a useful book, for Diamond documents those in impressive detail. The Bush administration's assumptions that U.S. forces would be welcomed as liberators by the vast majority of Iraqis and that the military occupation would be of short duration proved to be wildly optimistic. U.S. officials drastically underestimated the importance and influence of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. Washington even managed to mismanage the little things. For example, the first U.S. civilian administration arrived in Baghdad with an appalling lack of personnel who could speak Arabic.

The author's indictment of the Bush administration's faulty assumptions and wishful thinking is very much on the mark. Contrary to Washington's initial rosy scenario, the Iraq mission has become a fiasco. Indeed, as Diamond notes,

> from the moment the war ended, Iraq fell into a deepening quagmire of chaos, criminality, insurgency, and terrorism, which even in the months following the January 2005 elections, showed no prospect of ending anytime soon.

Diamond lays the blame for most of that ineptitude at the door of policymakers in Washington—especially senior officials in the Department of Defense. Officials in Iraq, though, do not escape responsibility, including the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, Amb. L. Paul Bremer III. It must have been painful for Diamond to criticize Bremer's performance, since he clearly admires the man, describing him as a "remarkable and talented administrator." That makes Diamond's critique all the more devastating.

> Soon after he arrived, Bremer imposed three fateful decisions that collectively put the United States down a treacherous path: dissolving the Iraqi Army, purging from public office tens of thousands of Iraqis . . . , and converting the U.S. presence into a formal occupation, with no clear timetable for transferring sovereignty back to the Iraqis. These decisions he made, or at least implemented, with a high degree of confidence but little knowledge of the country.

All of those criticisms are valid. Yet in this case, as in so many other instances in *Squandered Victory*, the author fails to get to the core of the problem. Diamond's underlying assumption is that, with better planning and execution, the occupa-

Ted Galen Carpenter, vice president for defense and foreign-policy studies at the Cato Institute, is the author or editor of 16 books on international affairs, including Peace & Freedom: Foreign Policy for a Constitutional Republic.

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tion of Iraq would have gone much more smoothly and could have produced highly beneficial results. It is perhaps understandable that Diamond might have embraced that dubious thesis when he was in Iraq during the first quarter of 2004—less than a year after the war began. It is less excusable that he continues to indulge in such a fantasy, given the numerous adverse developments that have afflicted the occupation since that time.

To take just one example, Diamond argues that the United States should have taken more forceful action to address the security situation and crush the growing insurgency. Yet in November 2004, the U.S. military adopted a highly proactive strategy, virtually leveling the city of Fallujah and (supposedly) killing or capturing more than 1,000 insurgents. Although Fallujah was clearly a military victory, it has had very little impact on the effectiveness or the resiliency of the armed campaign against the U.S. occupation. Diamond presents little credible evidence that resorting to a "Fallujah strategy" earlier in the year would have produced better results.

Incisive critics of the Iraq mission reject the notion that better planning or more astute tactics would have led to success. Even before the war, realist scholars warned that ousting Saddam Hussein's regime would convert Iraq into an arena of chaos. They cautioned that, by occupying Iraq, the United States would become responsible for the political future of that fragile, fractious country. Not only was a potent armed insurgency likely, they predicted, but, by removing the Baathist government, conditions would be created for radical, anti-Western Islamic forces to gain power. All of those warnings have come true.

Diamond was never a hard-core critic of the Iraq adventure. He emphasizes that he opposed the war, but the rationale for his opposition is most revealing. His primary objections to the invasion were that it was premature and that it was unilateral—not that it was a bad idea in principle. He wonders whether the mission was doomed "after we invaded Iraq without much international support." In Diamond's view, the United States should have given the U.N. inspectors more time to determine whether Hussein had violated U.N. resolutions regarding weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, if military action became necessary, it should have occurred only after the United States had built a vast international coalition with the U.N.'s blessing.

His criticism of the Iraq war is tentative and highly conditional. It also embraces an all-too-common liberal fantasy. Liberal opponents of the war explicitly or implicitly argue that, if the arrogant, unilateralist George W. Bush had not been in charge of the effort, developments would have gone far better. According to that thesis, the United States ultimately could have secured international support (including far more military contributions) both for the war and the postwar reconstruction effort. Typically, Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry was still arguing in late 2004 that he would be able to get other nations (especially the NATO allies) involved in Iraq.

Diamond embraced that same fallacy from the beginning. He laments: "On both the war and the postwar, the Bush administration pursued policies very different from what I had favored." Instead of a prolonged U.S. military occupation and direct rule by U.S. officials, he had advocated the rapid creation of an interim Iraqi government "through a transparent and legitimate process of dialogue, working alongside an international coalition that would include the United States but not necessarily be led by it."

The problem with his proposal is that there was always a dearth of evidence to support the liberal interventionist thesis. Contrary to the liberals' wishful thinking, other countries were not eager to spend their national treasure on transforming Iraq. They were even less willing to sacrifice the lives of their military personnel on the altar of a nation-building mission. The brutal reality is that the Bush administration launched the Iraq intervention in the only way it could have proceeded: as an overwhelmingly U.S.-British venture with a handful of good wishes and token contributions from the so-called coalition of the willing. Diamond's idea of a truly international intervention was always a nonstarter.

Just as Diamond does not understand why the Iraq mission was a terrible idea from the outset, he learns only secondary or peripheral lessons from its increasingly evident failure. He attaches great importance to Washington's decision to send a relatively small military force to invade and occupy the country.

> We never had enough troops in Iraq—particularly at the beginning when it was vital to secure public buildings, streets, and weapons depots; to hunt down the remnants of Saddam's forces; to seal the borders; and to establish decisive authority.

Leaving aside the dubious assumption that the United States—unable to control her own borders—could have sealed Iraq's vast, porous, and ill-defined ones, Diamond ignores the reality that it would have been difficult to send more troops to Iraq without a full-fledged mobilization. Indeed, the current level of troop commitment has strained both the active-duty force and the reserves to the breaking point. The United States does not have a military designed to police a large, disorderly imperial province. Yet that is what we have attempted to do in Iraq.

"Squandered Victory"

"The American occupation of Iraq was slipping into a new phase of crisis and violence that it would never overcome. But none of this should have come as a surprise; coalition figures had been pleading for months for action against Muqtada al-Sadr, and against other militias as well. On the morning of March 31, I visited one of Sadr's most bitter and effective enemies, a moderate Shiite cleric, Sayyid Farqad al-Qizwini, who was preaching the compatibility of Islam and democracy, indeed the necessity of democracy for Islam. . . .

"Qizwini implored the United States to act immediately. 'These militias will turn Iraq into a dark age of bloodletting if they are not stopped soon,' he told me. 'Any decision to dissolve the militias should be implemented in the next week.' At that moment, I thought Qizwini's statement a bit hyperbolic in its urgency. But I did not realize that the dam was just about to burst, and that this dramatic day would essentially mark the end of my involvement with the American occupation."

—*Larry Diamond*

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Diamond argues that the civilian side of the mission was also "underresourced." Consequently,

> the CPA relied heavily on a revolving door of diplomats and other personnel who would leave just as they had begun to develop local knowledge and ties, and on a cadre of eager young neophytes—some arrogant and others reflective, some idealistic and others driven by political ambition.

His message is that matters would have gone far differently if the United States had at her disposal a cadre of nation-building experts.

That is the core deficiency of Diamond's analysis. It is both naive and arrogant to assume that the same government that is incapable of delivering the mail efficiently or providing an adequate education for the nation's youth is capable of remaking entire societies on the other side of the planet. The goal of implanting democracy through force in cultures that have never experienced that political system and lack even the most basic preconditions for its development is a peculiar form of self-sacrificing imperialism. At its most fundamental level, nation-building is a belief that government social-engineering projects, which have failed so spectacularly at home, will somehow work abroad in cultures about which we know little or nothing.

None of that deters Diamond. Although he acknowledges that the American people "will have little appetite" for nation-building ventures, he contends that "humanitarian and geopolitical circumstances are bound to compel us to become involved again somewhere, sometime in postconflict reconstruction." Therefore, it is essential that we learn the right lessons from the bruising experience in Iraq. The first lesson, in his view, is to deploy a robust, utterly dominant military force to control the security environment from the outset.

> The second lesson concerns resources. Success in these difficult circumstances requires a substantial commitment of international human and financial resources, delivered in a timely fashion, and sustained over an extended period, lasting (through an international engagement) for a minimum of five to ten years.

If those are the requisites of a nation-building mission, it is no wonder that the American people are unlikely to have an appetite for such ventures. Indeed, it is a strategy that should appeal only to masochists.

Diamond leaves no doubt that he is a tepid, highly selective critic of the Iraq mission. "The final, overriding lesson of America's misadventure in postwar Iraq is not 'don't do it' but 'don't do it alone,' and 'don't do it with an imperial approach.'"

Woe to us all if those are the lessons that we take away from the Iraq debacle. America's invasion and occupation of that country was a fool's errand from its inception. The notion that better planning, more international support, and more efficient execution would have produced success is nothing more than a comforting delusion. If policymakers follow Diamond's advice, America will repeat the Iraq folly in another locale within a few years.

Squandered Victory had the potential to be the definitive indictment of Washington's Iraq mission. Unfortunately, it is merely an anemic version of the kind of book that is badly needed. c

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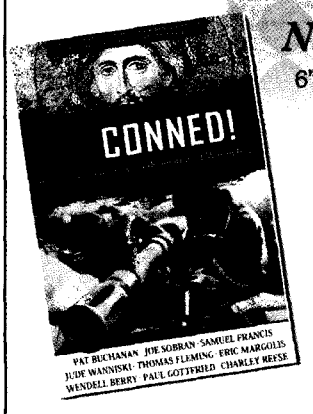
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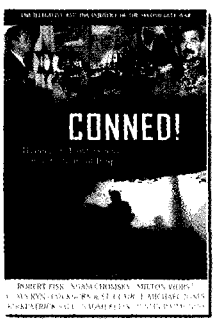

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History Is Contemporary

by Srdja Trifkovic

Serbia Through the Ages
by Alex Dragnich
Boulder, CO: East European Monographs; 160 pp., $35.00

◆

Alex Dragnich's attempt to compress a multifaceted millennium of Serbian history into 160 pages is bold and could be considered audacious in a lesser man. So much has to be left out, and what is included has to be treated with such economy and such precision, that many a professional would cringe at the task.

Professor Dragnich tackles it with panache and self-assurance that he can well afford. The reputation of this nonagenarian doyen of South Slavic studies in America is so solid, and his grasp of all the essentials so firm, that his book is beyond objections applicable to a run-of-the-mill academic monograph.

My main objection regards the book's editors, concerning a title that promises more than the work itself can deliver: A better one would have been "A Brief History of Modern Serbia, 1804-2004." The author's treatment of some four fifths of Serbia's recorded history, including the glory that was Serbia under the medieval Nemanjic dynasty, is compressed into a mere 18 pages (Chapters One and Two). That should have provided an expanded introduction to what really interests the author: the way in which a premodern peasant society managed to throw off the Ottoman yoke, establish a viable state structure, and limit their own rulers in such a way as to result eventually in a parliamentary democracy—and all this within a single century (1804-1903).

Dragnich's objective is to recount the story of a people for educated generalists, but his context is provided by the recent past, confirming the extent to which all history is contemporary history. After 15 years of relentless demonization by the North American and Western European elite class, "Serbia" has ceased to be a mere country, and "the Serbs" are no more just a small Balkan nation. It has become hard to mention the battle of Kosovo, or the *attentat* at Sarajevo, and keep those names separate from a host of associations induced by the likes of Clinton, Albright, Holbrooke, Amanpour, Sontag, and Wolfowitz.

Indeed, cringing at mention of "the Serb" is now a litmus test of a postmodern Westerner's institutional clubability, on the order of his acceptance of the greatness of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the desirability of "gay marriage," and the sanctity of "Dr." Martin Luther King, Jr. Dragnich senses this and readily admits that his purpose is twofold: to provide a better understanding of Yugoslavia's breakup, and to offer a more objective evaluation of the events surrounding it.

In that endeavor, the author does not succeed, not because his Balkan facts or his interpretations of Yugoslav realities are wrong, but because he underestimates the mendacity of the beast known as the "international community." Its controllers do not lack information or understanding; they lack common decency and the sense of moral distinction. Washington did not seek "to promote a peaceful settlement in Kosovo" and then get sidetracked; it actually wanted war. The horrors that the Clintonites and their European abettors have unleashed on the Serbs—among which the collective demonization and the demand for "denazification" exceed even those 78 days of bombing in 1999—go far beyond any single element of rationally defined policy.

Six years short of his 100th birthday, Alex Dragnich remains an optimist, however. He still believes that, "had the policy makers and the media been better informed about Balkan and particularly Serbian history, conclusions and actions may have been very different." He hopes that his fair-minded and reasonable account of Serbia's modern history "will prevent future mistakes and, very importantly, lead to some reassessment of recent policies and media coverage." That hope, unfortunately, is futile. Foreign meddling in the Balkans has a long history and an awful record, but many meddlers had known the score well before they proceeded to use that knowledge in pursuit of a "solution" that was mad, or bad, or both.

Austria-Hungary's viceroy of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Benjamin Kallay, invented and promoted a "Bosniak" identity—a ruse perpetuated by Paddy Ashdown and his ilk today—and, to that end, he banned his own *History of the Serbian Nation* from his Bosnian fiefdom. That book, written while Kallay was the Habsburg envoy in Belgrade (1868-75), was too objective about the Serbs and therefore subversive of his political agenda. It was freely available elsewhere in the Dual Empire, but try bringing a copy from Vienna or Budapest to Sarajevo, and Kallay's gendarmes would put you in jail.

Half a century later, Churchill knew the truth about Tito's intention to Bolshevize Yugoslavia after defeating his domestic enemies and assured his envoy to the Partisans' headquarters, Brig. Fitzroy Maclean, that it was OK to continue pretending otherwise. "Do you intend to make Yugoslavia your permanent residence after the war?" he asked Maclean in 1944, when the latter expressed some unease about the communists' true design.

In the same vein, more recent assurances that Izetbegovic was not an Islamist and that the KLA were not terrorists invariably came from people equally certain not to make Bosnia or Kosovo their permanent residence after making them safe for *jihad*. What they are doing is a crime, and a systematic distortion of history is an important tool of their trade.

Even if all history is, in some measure, contemporary history, it should never be dominated by the ideological preferences of the elite class as thoroughly as the South Slav history has been dominated in the Western world over the past two decades. Alex Dragnich's *Serbia Through the Ages* makes a welcome contribution toward the end of that dominance.

Chronicles' *foreign-affairs editor Srdja Trifkovic is the author of* The Sword of the Prophet: Islam—History, Theology, Impact on the World.

I Would Prefer Not To . . .

by James O. Tate

Melville: His World and Work
by Andrew Delbanco
New York: Alfred A. Knopf; 416 pp., $30.00

◆

In these biographically minded days, Professor Delbanco has not called his work a biography of Melville—his subtitle does not say "His *Life* and Work." I think this distinction is not without sig-

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nificance, particularly because his book takes the form, if not the substance, of a literary biography: It follows the course of an author's life and production in chronological order. Of course, in this case, we have to say, "Some life! Some production!" Odious comparisons force us to conclude that Herman Melville had the most spectacular career in the history of American letters, when we consider his ascent, his fall, his years of withdrawal, and his resurrection in the 20th century. Even so, the blanks in Melville's life are chasms which must daunt any biographer, while requiring extensive passages of speculation and of cultural criticism. And so it is here.

The thing is brilliantly done. Andrew Delbanco's writing is so resourceful and flexible that I was a bit embarrassed to realize that, ground down by too much exposure, I had begun to expect or even to wish for a plonking level of mediocrity when it comes to the academic treatment of such a set topic. Though the professor is fortified by extensive scholarly knowledge, he is not weighed down by it, and his book has a quality of imaginative flight and a bracing ease that is remarkable and especially to be prized as the vehicle for the delivery of a story that has inherently more than its share of gloom and doom and leaden melancholy.

But there is also the possibility that Andrew Delbanco's prose style has had the paradoxical effect of highlighting his idiosyncrasies and even of distorting his message, which is that Herman Melville's work speaks to us today with a particular force and appeal. Of course, there is much truth to this argument, and his treatments of *Benito Cereno* and *Bartleby the Scrivener* quite rightly emphasize the point. Yet this very point can be blunted if there is any slighting of Melville's critical or dialectical quality—he wrote *against* the grain of 19th-century liberalism, so that to see him as the prophet of postmodern attitudes is to understand him rather too conveniently. The figures of Captain Delano in the one story and the lawyer/narrator in the other are shown to be uncomprehending witnesses of the truths that others suffer. The American ethos was incapable of tragic awareness, as witness Emerson, but there was no such lack on the part of Herman Melville. In spite of his metaphysical sophistication, or rather because of it, Melville is not the culture hero of his time who speaks to ours. That role has been taken over by a channeling Ralph Waldo Emerson and a cruising Walt Whitman and a masturbating Emily Dickinson and whomever. Melville was more appropriately the hero of strenuous modernism in the 1920's and later, or even of the chastened postwar liberalism of men such as Trilling and Niebuhr after 1945. Delbanco has hold of a culture hero, to be sure, but that does not mean that he fits every mold or that he is necessarily the exemplar of polymorphous perversity.

In his comments on *Moby-Dick*, Delbanco has, to my mind at least, misinterpreted a point of literary allusion. He asserts that an allusion to the Palinurus of Book V of Vergil's *Aeneid* (itself an allusion, as he does not mention, to a passage in Homer's *Odyssey*) is confined to a passage of Ishmael's imagination. But the allusion to Palinurus is more powerfully exercised in the disappearance of Bulkington, which would then redeem what Delbanco sees as a botch. If, as has been suggested, the character of Bulkington is an allegorical nod to Sen. Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, it would also fit into the political allegory of *Moby-Dick*. But then, Delbanco has gone further to distort that obscure allegory. The ship of state is driven to disaster by the oddly sympathetic monomaniac; and, as a book of its time, *Moby-Dick* is a prophecy of disaster. That disaster seemed to materialize in the Civil War in which the Old Republic destroyed itself. But, for Delbanco, a more telling analogy is with Adolf Hitler and fascism, and this analogy is repeated, as he stretches the string even unto George W. Bush. With this kind of insight, Herman Melville doesn't need any foresight, or any hindsight, either.

But for that, the treatment of the outrageous *Moby-Dick* is very good. And so is the account of that most "terrible" of American books, *Pierre, or the Ambiguities*, the one that caused Melville to be called "crazy." But it is a remark of Delbanco's, about that book's reflection of Melville's own reality, that seems crazy to me: "What goes on between husband and wife is a sealed mystery even if one hears the couple through the bedroom wall—and so we cannot hope to know much about Melville's actual sexual life." In the first place, the word *hope*, placed so closely to the image of coitus, seems strongly to suggest a prurient interest in the sex life, if any, of dead people, or even live ones. Related to this are suggestions about Melville's putative or presumptive or just presumed homosexuality, and a few allusions to what we may call the erotics of reading. There is something a wee bit distasteful, as well as plenty absurd, about recruiting good old Herman as part of the contemporary "gay rights" movement, and that is not an invention of Delbanco. But he does think that such speculation makes Herm more cool for the contemporary reader. Right—but I thought we had just declared that *we cannot hope to know much about Melville's actual sexual life*. Or about anyone's, except, maybe, that of Paris Hilton. Herman, I never knew it could be like this!

Andrew Delbanco's book on Herman Melville may be hip to a fault, and it neglects the best poetry written about the Civil War, but it is at heart an excellent work and a provocative treatment of the subject. Interested readers might want to continue with Stanton Garner's *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, Robert K. Wallace's *Melville and Turner: Spheres of Love and Fright*, and Ann Douglas's treatment of *Pierre* in *The Feminization of American Culture*.

James O. Tate is a professor of English literature at Dowling College on Long Island.

The Road to Ideology

by Joseph Scotchie

A Student's Guide to American Political Thought
by George Carey
Wilmington: ISI Books;
114 pp., $8.00

◆

Americans have never been big on "political theory." In our nation's early decades—and arguably, up to World War II—folks were comfortable with their republican form of government and its tenets of self-reliance and self-government. However, over the past 50 years, political thought—specifically concerning what the U.S. Constitution actually means—has undergone a radical transformation. During that time, self-government has been all but obliterated. Few, if any, Americans alive today have ever lived in a republic. A recent Supreme Court decision—*Kelo v. City of New London*, allowing residential homes to be demolished in favor of commercial development—has effectively

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abolished private property. Conservatives know something is wrong. Alas, their remedy is to place all their hope in the Supreme Court, trusting that Republican presidents will appoint a conservative majority to that body, one that will roll back decades of judicial tyranny.

Professor Carey's volume is the latest in a series of impressive student guides published by ISI Books, of which I have read—and recommend—John Lukacs's guide to history, R.V. Young's treatment of Western literature, and Mark Henrie's introduction to the core curriculum. Professor Carey's book not only chronicles the descent into centralization but lays out the vexing questions that have driven political debates since the nation's beginnings: the relevance of the Declaration of Independence; the role of Congress; and the problem of virtue in a republic based on limited government.

If America had a political tradition, it was one based on the decentralization of power. Reading this book brought me back to M.E. Bradford's magisterial studies of the Founding Fathers, especially *A Worthy Company*, which contains short biographies of each of the 55 Framers of the Constitution. All of these gentlemen, whether from New England, the Mid-Atlantic States, or the South, insisted on local rule, and such was foremost on their minds as they struggled to draft and ratify a constitution. And, keep in mind, the Antifederalists, those opponents of ratification whose numbers included such giants as Patrick Henry and George Mason, believed that the Federalists were far too interested in centralizing power.

Decentralization, of course, did not survive. Professor Carey identifies the two major blows that brought down the Old Republic: the emergence of a strong presidency and the rise of judicial supremacy. Beginning with Andrew Jackson, certain presidents sought to become men of the people, while conducting an activist presidency. Woodrow Wilson, for one, championed such a model even before he was elected. The process reached fruition with the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the first president to master the mass media. The rise of the presidency has had its greatest effect in the realm of foreign policy. Here, the president, serving as "commander in chief," "the most powerful man in the world," and, perhaps most impressively, the "leader of the free world," must be given a free hand to wage wars, in any fashion he pleases, with whatever country deserves to be on the receiving end of American military might.

Still, a strong presidency has not necessarily meant the end of republicanism. Many foreign adventures of recent decades have turned out badly, and American imperialism, like all other empires before it, is doomed to fail. When Ronald Reagan, during the 1980's, acted in a prudent manner (at least compared to the administrations of Bush I and II), the results were more satisfactory. In that decade, many conservative pundits advised Reagan that he could, for instance, fund the Nicaraguan Contras without congressional aid. Reagan, however, preferred to pursue the legal—*i.e.*, congressional—route when carrying out that controversial policy (which led, even so, to the destructive Iran-Contra scandal).

Rather, it has been the Supreme Court that has inflicted the real blows to self-government. Professor Carey does not take sides, but, in the book's final pages, he pretty much confirms this view. Consider only how the revolution prevailed:

> Most of the Court's defenders . . . do not dispute that the Court has legislated. Some see the Court as making up . . . for the failures of Congress, as in the 1950s desegregation cases. Others . . . see the Court as authorized, whenever the opportunity presents itself, to advance basic values, such as human dignity, that are tacitly embodied in the Constitution or Declaration of Independence. Still, others view the Constitution as a "living" document, with the Court, sensitive to the values derived from the Declaration, providing much-needed updates and modifications in light of changing social values and practices.

Professor Carey has spent a long career teaching and writing about the Constitution. His concise history has its melancholy moments, especially when discussing the role Christianity played in the formation of the Old Republic. Nearly all of the Framers (and certainly their opponents) considered Christian morality an absolute necessity to maintaining a free and virtuous republic. Yet here, again, the Court has acted as a big wrecking ball, having taken the "wall of separation" reading as a green light to wage war on the mere appearance of a Christian civilization. Conservatives flail away at the darkness, accusing the Supreme Court of legitimizing "cultural debasement" and holding a "hostility toward religion" that itself has undermined those institutions charged with sustaining old-fashioned virtues. "[The] modern Court's understanding of the proper relationship between the state and religion is markedly different from that which prevailed during the founding era," Professor Carey observes in his understated manner.

The author cites such progressives as Herbert Croly, longtime editor of the *New Republic*, for spearheading a revolution in the interpretation of the Constitution. He also notes the public broadsides (which included FDR's demagogic attacks) against the far more conservative Supreme Court of the 1930's, which, in turn, put "considerable political pressure [on the Court] to change course."

All this happened as the United States underwent her own enormous transformation from an agrarian republic to an urban-industrial mass democracy. *A Student's Guide to American Political Thought* has sent me back to Professor William Quirk's recent essays in *Chronicles*, which maintain that only a Congress willing to control the Supreme Court's docket and overturn dictatorial decisions can restore self-government to the United States. Those conservatives who see a revamped Supreme Court as our only hope may be indulging in wishful thinking, while also displaying constitutional ignorance on their own part.

Joseph Scotchie is the author, most recently, of Street Corner Conservative: Patrick J. Buchanan and His Times.

The Good Times Rolled

by Kevin Lynch

Living It Up at National Review: A Memoir
by Priscilla Buckley
Dallas: Spence Publishing Company; 247 pp., $27.95

◆

Almost 50 years ago, William F. Buckley, Jr., made what was undoubtedly the shrewdest and most audacious move of his life. He invited his sister Priscilla

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to quit her job and join the staff of a magazine he had just started. To appreciate fully the depths of his brotherly nerve, it should be understood that, at the time, the young woman was living happily in Paris, which, in the mid-50's, had recovered from the war and was, well, Paris. What's more, she was a rising star at the Paris bureau of the United Press news agency. In the years since, United Press, now known as United Press International, has fallen on hard times, but back then, it was considered the writer's news agency and was the envy of hacks who worked for the AP and Reuters. And what would she get in return for abandoning UP and the City of Light? Why, the chance to be part of a magazine that just about everyone predicted would flop. Yet the sister was as nervy as her brother. She accepted his offer, which he sweetened by granting her six weeks' vacation per year in partial compensation for a minuscule salary. So began, in 1956, Priscilla Buckley's career at *National Review*, where she would remain for more than 40 years. *Living It Up at National Review* is her memoir of those years.

At the start, she had to have had a few qualms about her decision. *National Review*'s editors brawled with one another as easily as they did with the liberal world that surrounded them. Willi Schlamm, a founding editor, lasted only two years. The problem was his firm belief that he, rather than Bill Buckley, should be in charge of the magazine. Schlamm was asked to leave, Miss Buckley says delicately, "after a number of eruptions of increasing unpleasantness." (Yet, among NR staffers, his name lived on long after he left, thanks to one of his antagonists at the magazine. James Burnham immortalized him in a Burnham principle of the cubicle world: "Every office has a Schlamm.") Another editor, Willmoore Kendall, soon went the way of Schlamm, after picking fights with every member of the senior staff. Following this initial turbulence, however, Bill Buckley settled on a senior crew that stayed at the magazine many years: Burnham, Frank Meyer, William Rusher, Jeffrey Hart—and Priscilla Buckley, who became managing editor in 1959.

But *Living It Up at National Review* is about more than life at *National Review*. Almost half of it is devoted to Miss Buckley's adventures during her weeks away from the magazine. She has hunted duck in the swamps of South Carolina and antelope on the savannahs of Mozambique; sailed everywhere, from the East River to Bora Bora; taken a luxury barge down the Seine and a far-from-luxurious raft down the rapids of the Colorado River. She has gone ballooning in the United States and Europe, is an accomplished skier and an excellent golfer, skilled enough to play in the Women's National Amateur Championship. That's fine, you say, but has she delivered a baby? Of course she has: a girl named Priscilla, the second child of her sister Maureen. (It should be noted that, unlike the other activities, this last wasn't something she set out to do. It just happened one night.)

Delightful as Miss Buckley may be as a traveling companion, I believe the people who benefited most from her company were those with her the 46 weeks of the year when she wasn't gallivanting around the world—that is, the hundreds of people who spent time at *National Review* during her reign. Like the books editor of this magazine, I was one of those hundreds. Because of his many commitments—the TV show *Firing Line*, the syndicated column, his speaking engagements, *etc.*—the magazine's editor in chief was far less a presence than the managing editor he had so wisely lured away from Paris. While this may have been news to the vast majority of NR subscribers, anyone who worked at the magazine realized her influence. Miss Buckley recounts a remark Burnham made to Bill Buckley during dinner one night at a Manhattan restaurant: "Bill," Burnham said, "you and I think we are putting out a magazine but what we actually have is Miss Buckley's finishing school for young ladies and gentlemen of conservative persuasion."

Living It Up at National Review provides an insight into what an extraordinary school Miss Buckley ran. She took in students from a variety of backgrounds, including a Marine Corps veteran who only wore sweatshirts and an Ivy Leaguer who only wore Brooks Brothers, and somehow managed to create an atmosphere where these disparate souls not only felt comfortable and welcome but were able to flourish. However, you have to read between the lines to get a sense of the inestimable contribution she made to the magazine. She is more than modest to a fault. In her, it rises to the level of mortal sin.

What's more, she loved to laugh, even when it was at the expense of her brother. One of the many stories she tells is of a joke played on him while he was in Switzerland, where he would go each year for several weeks to ski and write. It was decided that, in his absence, the editors would concoct a page of editorial paragraphs whose sole intent was to make him cringe with embarrassment. Some had obvious grammatical errors, some were kooky, and some were just plain tasteless. The page of these fake paragraphs was then expertly glued over a real editorial page and sent off to Switzerland. A short time later came a memo from her brother that showed how successful the joke was. "The seizure of coyness in this section," he wrote, "is quite impossible to understand . . . and makes me weep." Miss Buckley was delighted. He had completely fallen for it.

Though *Living It Up at National Review* tells the stories of the many characters who passed through the editorial offices of the magazine over the years, not an unkind word is said about one of them. (So merciful is the author that even the Stalinist tour guide who browbeat a band of NR staffers about the wonders of communism gets treated gently.) This absolute generosity of spirit will not surprise anyone who knows Priscilla Buckley. Uttering an unkind word is something she is constitutionally incapable of doing.

In 1999, Miss Buckley retired from *National Review*, having more than fulfilled the mission her brother asked her to undertake 43 years earlier. Since her retirement, NR staffers have surely learned a law that Burnham had no need to enunciate. Every office may have a Willi Schlamm, but there is only one Priscilla Buckley. It is no wonder that, years after they graduated, the students of Miss Buckley's finishing school remain forever grateful.

Kevin Lynch served as articles editor for National Review.

Flickers of Resistance

by Thomas Fleming

The Napoleon of Notting Hill
by G.K. Chesterton
New York: Dover Publications;
160 pp., $8.95

◆

"In the twentieth century you could not see the ground for clever men.

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. . . And all these clever men were at work giving accounts of what would happen in the next age." The discussion of prophetic literature with which Chesterton begins *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* is itself an accurate piece of prophecy. As he points out, most of the books devoted to the ever-receding horizon of the future are really descriptions of the present carried one step further:

> Tolstoy and the Humanitarians said that the world was growing more merciful, and therefore no one would ever desire to kill. And Mr. Mick not only became a vegetarian, but at length declared vegetarianism doomed ("shedding," as he called it finely, "the green blood of the silent animals"), and predicted that men in a better age would live on nothing but salt. And then came the pamphlet from Oregon . . . called, "Why should Salt suffer?"

In their extrapolated predictions, such would-be prophets as H.G. Wells and George Orwell were both myopic enough to have hailed from Oregon. World wars have turned out to be too costly to sustain; continental federations, too unwieldy to keep together. Successful empires require subtler, less dramatic methods than Wells or Orwell, Hitler or Stalin could project from their experience of World War I and its aftershocks. Aldous Huxley came far closer to reality with his fantasy of a world subdued not by jackbooted armies but by sexual freedom, mood-elevating drugs, and the soft propaganda of films, pop songs, and fact-free education. Chesterton—who, like Huxley, was more a poet than a journalist—envisioned an absolute despotism run by colorless bureaucrats who would eliminate all the little ethnic and regional differences, all the eccentricities of class and profession that had made European civilization the gorgeous mosaic that it was.

In Chesterton's future, England is ruled by a bureaucratic machine in which the king is chosen by lot. When the lot falls on a practical joker named Auberon Quinn (a dead ringer for Max Beerbohm), the new king decides, as a prank, to recreate the old London boroughs and invest them with a medieval pageantry of his own invention. No one takes Quinn's posturing seriously, except the 19-year-old provost of Notting Hill, Adam Wayne, who is fired with enthusiasm for the drab and familiar streets of his own neighborhood. In the interests of progress and their own personal gain, the leaders of the other boroughs decide to run a thoroughfare through Notting Hill's Pump Street, and Wayne rallies the inhabitants to resist. When the politicians seeking to buy him off deprecate the size of Pump Street, Wayne fires back: "That which is large enough for the rich to covet . . . is large enough for the poor to defend," and, when King Auberon tries to make him see the ludicrous side of Notting Hill patriotism, he explains that "Notting Hill . . . is a rise or high ground of the common earth, on which men have built houses to live, in which they are born, fall in love, pray, marry, and die. Why should I think it absurd?"

Not content with defending his borough from aggression, Wayne appeals to the professional imaginations of the shopkeepers. "I can imagine," he tells the Pump Street grocer, "what it must be to sit all day as you do surrounded with wares from all the ends of the earth, from strange seas that we have never sailed and strange forests that we could not even picture." At first, his only convert is a toy merchant fond of war games, and together they plan the revolt of Notting Hill. Their very success, however, is almost their undoing, as the businessmen and bureaucrats succumb to bloodlust and patriotism. In the final struggle, a working man tired of hearing "Notting Hill!" cried in his face exclaims, "Well, what about Bayswater? . . . Bayswater forever," to which the mad provost responds, "We have won. . . . We have taught our enemies patriotism."

The victory of Notting Hill is at first a liberation of all London; eventually, however, the borough becomes arrogant and inspires the other neighborhoods to revolt against her empire. But in his defeat, Wayne achieves his greatest triumph, in teaching his enemies patriotism.

Chesterton's fable delighted its first readers, but his prophetic insight has taken longer to be recognized. It is partly the playful spirit of the book that prevents us from taking him seriously, but an even greater obstacle is our own stupid conviction that history moves in a straight line. If, we say, the tendency since the Renaissance has been the agglomeration of little powers into great powers—of Florence into the Duchy of Tuscany into the Kingdom of Italy into the European Union—then it does little good to speak wistfully of the days when an independent Florence was at war with Siena and Arezzo and the very neighborhoods of Florence had their own names, their own flags, their own costumes, and—above all—their own honor for which the inhabitants contended in street fights. Even the United States, when they were a republic, more resembled medieval Siena or Adam Wayne's London than they do the mass-produced population that is sent to fight under the flag of the United Nations. But that, as we say, is history.

It is only after the passing of the 20th century that we can fully appreciate Chesterton's prophecy, not only because nations of the world are tending more and more every day toward the lifeless bureaucracies that he predicted, but because we are beginning to see the first flickers of resistance. In America, the western states are passing Tenth Amendment resolutions; in Italy, the Northern League (whatever its political future) has been successful in recreating a Lombard identity; and, in Eastern Europe, the old nationalities are lifting their heads up out of the rubble of empire, singing their old songs, reopening the ancient wounds whose very throbbing shows they are still alive.

One of Chesterton's hunches was that a New World Order would not tolerate particularity, and, at the beginning of his novel, Quinn meets the president of Nicaragua. When told that Nicaragua is no longer a country, the old man declares,

> Nicaragua has been conquered like Athens. Nicaragua has been annexed like Jerusalem. . . . The Yankee and the German and the brute powers of modernity have trampled it with the hoofs of oxen.

One of Quinn's civil-servant friends explains that Nicaragua was a stumbling block to civilization: "We moderns believe in a great cosmopolitan civilization, one which shall include all the talents of all the absorbed peoples." To understand Chesterton, one must have some sympathy for the unabsorbed peoples, even when, as in the case of Nicaragua and Iraq, they were ruled by a brutal dictator, and for the poor Serbs of Bosnia and Kosovo, even though our whole great cosmopolitan civilization is against them.

Thomas Fleming is the author, most recently, of The Morality of Everyday Life.

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Letter From Charleston

by Jack Trotter

The Mongrel Din

◆

This year marks the centennial of the publication of Owen Wister's *Lady Baltimore*, a comedy of manners about a wedding cake. Or, rather, it is about an honorable young Charlestonian's determination to keep faith with a decidedly dishonorable young woman whom he has, in a moment of fatal infatuation, promised to marry—thus, the necessity of the cake from whence the novel takes its name. The novel sold well enough to become one of the best sellers of 1906 and was warmly praised by the likes of Henry James and Edith Wharton. For several decades, Wister's witty tale of honor and deception received a generally favorable critical reception, but its critical fortunes declined precipitously after Wister's death in 1938. Since the 1960's, the scant attention paid to *Lady Baltimore* has focused on its racial politics, to the neglect of the novel as a whole.

This is, indeed, a sorry state of affairs. Even here in Charleston, the city celebrated so lovingly in the novel's pages, *Lady Baltimore* seems to be the subject of a discreet silence. For some time, I was puzzled by this, for the novel has lost little if any of its original charm. While DuBose Heyward's sentimental *Porgy* is daily fodder for every horse-and-buggy tour guide on Meeting Street and Pat Conroy (a decidedly inferior writer) is feted at Spoleto *soirées*, Wister and his *Lady* seem to arouse only embarrassment. Wister's fault, it seems, is twofold: First, his treatment of racial politics a century ago falls well short of anything that might qualify for Oprah's Book Club today. Second, his narrator is unabashedly elitist in his admiring presentation of an old Charleston aristocracy besieged by egalitarian envy and *nouveau riche* vulgarity. All of this is exacerbated by another problem. If the outspoken narrator, Augustus, could be seen as just another character, then his views might be more easily (and smugly) dismissed as the pitiable bigotry of a benighted era. But Augustus is too transparently a mouthpiece for the views of Wister himself, and, for the sensitive and progressive modern reader, this presents a perplexing matter of conscience. He begins to feel implicated by the very act of reading; he is, willy-nilly, somehow complicit. Thus the author must be made to shoulder the blame for the reader's feelings of guilt by association.

I have no intention of exploring here Wister's views on the race question, except to say that they were very nearly identical to those of his friend, Theodore Roosevelt, and that the views of both men were altogether typical of a period when—in the backwash of a failed Reconstruction—the vast majority of Southerners and Northerners alike seriously doubted whether black Americans would ever be ready for full equality. Far more worthy of our attention is Wister's exploration of the tensions inherent in the Southern code of honor upheld by the old Charleston aristocracy. For it is upon a matter of honor that the primary plot of *Lady Baltimore* turns.

Augustus—the scion of a family whose ancestors can be traced to the old colonial stock—is a refugee from the North vacationing in the South who represents himself as one of the new generation of Northerners free of the anti-Southern prejudices of the Civil War generation. In his contempt for the present age, Augustus yearns to recover the spirit of the age that preceded the war, the spirit of the first American nation, the first American family, which was one in North and South. Frustrated not only by the moral hypocrisy of the North but by the vulgar materialism of its *nouveau riche*, he has come to the South predisposed to find there some remnant of an older, more graceful world. And what he discovers in this "little city of oblivion . . . shut in with its lavender and pressed-rose memories" is a place like "nowhere else in America"—a city whose charm, character, and "true elegance" provide him with a much-needed succor against the "sullen welter of democracy" that afflicts the rest of the country. Having come armed with letters of introduction, he is invited into the parlors of the best old Charleston families, who are very much agitated, he learns, over the impending marriage between John Mayrant, the novel's hero, and Hortense Rieppe, a young woman whom he met on a trip north to Newport and to whom, with a misguided youthful ardor, he became engaged. Hortense is reputed to be from Georgia (much to the disgust of the Charlestonians) but is now a much sought after *habitué* of the Northern watering holes of the *nouveaux riche*. She is, in the words of the old ladies of Charleston, a "steel wasp," an alluring opportunist. This, Mayrant has come reluctantly to see but feels that, as a gentleman, "he must stand to his word." In this stubborn refusal, Mayrant stands not only against Augustus, who tries repeatedly to convince John that his sense of honor on this point is a piece of "moral quixotism," but against the community at large.

Bertram Wyatt-Brown reminds us that the term *honor* signifies not only an individual but a communal code; it is "a cluster of ethical rules, most readily found in societies of small communities, by which judgments of behavior are ratified by community consensus." As Mayrant persists in his "folly," the moral consensus of his tightly knit community hardens around him with increasing disapprobation. Gradually, Augustus comes to recognize the nature of Mayrant's special importance in this community. He stands at the center of a "circle . . . of interested people"; he is the "jewel" in their "collective sense of possession [of] him, . . . as of an heir to some princely estate, who must be worthy for the sake of the community even before he was worthy for his own sake." Mayrant is one of the few young men in the circle of the old Charleston elite whose character and breeding is worthy of the antebellum ideal that remains enshrined in their collective memory. Thus, "while he might amuse himself," he may not "marry outside certain lines prescribed, or depart from his circle's established creeds, divine and social."

I have returned to the above quoted lines many times since I first discovered *Lady Baltimore*, and I am always made uncomfortably aware of how alien, and even offensive, they must seem to almost anyone born, like me, after World War II. Above all, we are affronted by the notion that "character" may require "breeding," that it cannot be put on like a pair of Hilfiger aviator shades purchased at a discount at our local outlet mall. And what would the average American these

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days make of the claim that he should be "worthy for the sake of the community"? John Mayrant, however, is tormented by a conflict that places him at odds with a circle of kith and kin whose collective "character" is woven of the same stubborn cloth as his own. Thus, he seeks refuge in a friendship with Augustus, who is surreptitiously determined to persuade the younger man of the error of his ways. But Mayrant insists that, if a man is a gentleman, "he must stand to his word . . . unless [the lady] releases him."

In every good tale of chivalry, there must be an enchantment. When Hortense Rieppe makes her entrance in the novel's second half, the power of Mayrant's original enchantment is clarified. Even the seemingly sexless Augustus is brought, if only for a moment, under her spell. When she first arrives in Charleston with her entourage of *nouveaux riche* friends from the North (collectively known as "the Replacers"), she is mysteriously veiled. Later, when he looks upon her face, he reflects that "her outward appearance was as shrouded as her inward qualities." When she speaks (leaving Augustus in an hilarious state of libidinal paralysis), "each slow, schooled syllable" simmers with erotic challenge. But even as Augustus is momentarily intoxicated by the sensual charms of this Georgian Venus, Mayrant (like Tannhauser in Wagner's opera of that name, frequently alluded to in the novel), encountering Eliza La Heu, the novel's heroine, in the Woman's Exchange, falls under the power of another, more spiritualized affection. Beneath the Carolina charm of the vivacious Eliza lies a chaste and patient devotion. Like *Tannhauser*'s Elizabeth, she possesses a "natural and perfect dignity" that John instantly recognizes. But his promise to the treacherous Hortense prevents him from acting on that recognition.

What most baffles Augustus is why Hortense has not long since broken with Mayrant. If she is the gold-digger that he suspects, then why her continued interest in his apparently impoverished friend? Eventually, he learns that she is motivated, at least in part, by the knowledge that Mayrant will soon be a rich man. She has discovered (with the assistance of one of her Replacer friends) that an apparently worthless phosphate mine that John stands to inherit is actually far from worthless—a fact of which Mayrant himself is as yet unaware. Augustus believes that he has now plumbed the depths of the real Hortense. Her mystery stripped away as the product of cunning artifice, she becomes for him the "perfected specimen of the latest American moment." And yet, some doubt remains. If Hortense's opportunism is as purely material as Augustus assumes, why choose Mayrant when she has any number of freshly minted Newport millionaires at her beck and call? Quite by chance, Augustus overhears a whispered conversation that provides him the final revelation: "And now the voice of Hortense sank still deeper in dreaminess,—down to where the truth lay; and from those depths . . . she spoke: 'I think I want him for his innocence.'"

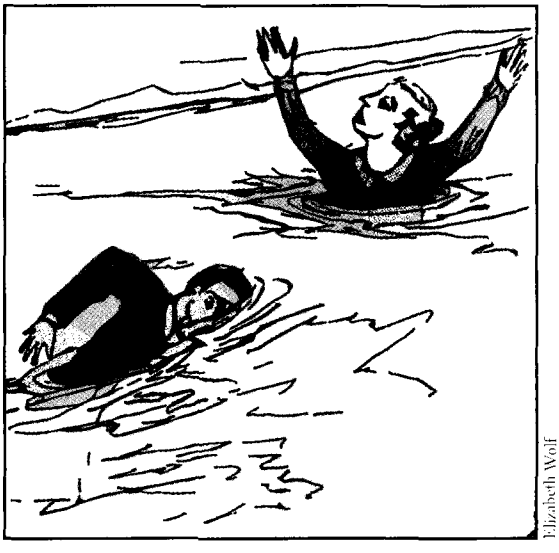
As Augustus recognizes, what Mayrant arouses in Hortense is a perverse passion, the only sort of "love" that she, in her indifferent sophistication, is able to feel. She and her Replacer friends are suffering from an "ennui [that] gnaws at their vitals." For Hortense, Mayrant is the treatment for the disease. But Augustus is sure that a day will come when, "having had her taste of John's innocence," Hortense will "wax restless for the Replacers, . . . for the prismatic life." Imagining what such a future might mean for his young friend, the oracular Augustus reflects, "Then it might interest her to corrupt John."

Fortunately for Mayrant, that day never comes. The novel's providential machinery and his own well-bred moral elegance combine in a moment of poetic justice to yield the solution to his dilemma—the "release" from his hastily plighted promise that his honor requires. When Augustus and Mayrant join the Replacers aboard banker Charlie Bohm's sumptuously provided yacht for a prenuptial cocktail party, Hortense, on a whim, throws herself fully clothed into the waters of Charleston harbor. This melodramatic display seems to have no other purpose than to gratify her own sense of power over Mayrant; she is confident that the chivalrous boy will dive in after her. But in the event, she fails to realize the danger of the outgoing tide and is swiftly drawn away, struggling to stay afloat. Mayrant, of course, does not hesitate and manages at length to save her life.

Only Augustus is close enough to overhear the words exchanged between his friend and Hortense as Mayrant helps her aboard the yacht: "And so I owe you my life," says Hortense, softly. "And so I restore it to you complete," John replies. In the moral economy of this comedy of manners, this amounts to a kind of sacrificial exchange. Mayrant has bound himself to Hortense by an oath that cannot be broken but which can be *dissolved*, as it were, by a higher moral claim. Having risked his own life to save hers, Mayrant is now free. Hortense has become the debtor; it is now Mayrant who holds the bond, the title to her restored life. To return that life to her "complete" is to dissolve the bond and, thus, the earlier promise of marriage. To her credit, Hortense immediately recognizes the irony, and, for the first time, her mask of indifference slips. Observed only by Augustus, Hortense turns away, and he reads "her face for an instant . . . before the furious hate in it was mastered."

In this sacrificial exchange, Wister clearly wishes to suggest a broader moral application. In spite of the great crime that was slavery, the South, like Mayrant himself, has, in her long post-bellum suffering and impoverishment, managed to preserve a moral innocence and a grace that the North has lost. This is most evident in Augustus' repeatedly expressed loathing for the Replacers. They represent for Augustus (and surely for Wister) the antithesis of everything the old Charleston aristocracy stands for. Above all, their natures are warped by an obsessive preoccupation with the economic "angle." Given a tour of St. Michael's church, they are blind to its time-hallowed charms. Of banker Charlie Bohm, Augustus notes that

> Instinct and long training had given his eye . . . the glance of a Replacer—which plainly calculated "Can this be made worth money to me?" and which died instantly to a glaze of indifference on seeing that



Elizabeth Wolf

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no money could be made.

Wister undoubtedly intended the Replacers to be understood as a broadly representative portrayal of the rise of a new American elite. They are repeatedly associated with the decline of social standards at Newport, where self-made millionaires were buying up everything in sight, especially the "family pictures" of the old gentility in a fraudulent effort to authenticate their dubiously achieved social status. The "yellow rich," as Augustus calls them, are the essence of everything that had gone wrong with America since the triumph of the North. Unlike the old gentility they are replacing, they are devoid of any moral core.

As Stow Persons has argued in *The Decline of American Gentility*, the displacement of the old gentry class was all but accomplished at the turn of the century. Much of Wister's concern for the damage wrought by the *nouveau riche* is confirmed in Persons' study. He notes that the rise of the economic elite on the Gilded Age tide of industrial and commercial wealth

> destroyed the social distinctions which had formerly prevailed, substituting for them a common mercenary standard. . . . In place of the former stability of a society divided into relatively firm social classes there now emerged the restless universal flux of the mass society,

a mass whose values were increasingly shaped by a desire to emulate the new economic elite. It might be argued that Wister's real motive in writing *Lady Baltimore* was to reassert the privilege of his own gentry class against an increasingly threatening *demos*. I would argue, however, that any attempt to dismiss the novel as a reactionary interlude in the long march of the masses toward an imagined egalitarian paradise will fall short of the mark. Perhaps we would prefer to believe that social elites are by definition pernicious and that political progress will eventually eliminate them. But history and common sense suggest that we are mistaken, that the formation of elites may be, in fact, a constant in human societies. And if that is so, then the most fundamental political question involves judgments about the *quality* of those elites.

In spite of Augustus' occasional flashes of historical pessimism in *Lady Baltimore*, Wister himself was hopeful that the tidal wave of moral corruption that he saw inundating the Old Republic would recede in time. He clearly intended to offer in his hero, Mayrant, a model for the formation of a new elite bred in part out of the old gentry stock. In the final chapter in the novel, Augustus visits the now-married John Mayrant and Eliza La Heu. He reflects that it was once his

> good fortune to make [Eliza] see that there is on our soil nowadays such a being as an American, who feels, wherever he goes in our native land, that it is all his and that he belongs everywhere to it.

While Wister's dream of the restoration of the values of the Old Republic has, lamentably, gone unrealized, his optimism about a reunion of Yankee Doodle and Dixie has, ironically, been more than vindicated, though in a manner that he would have deplored. Dixie is no less enamored these days of the "economic angle" than is Yankee Doodle. And here in Charleston—called the Holy City because so many martyrs to the cause of independence lie buried here—the Replacers have come at last to roost. Back in 1906, when *Lady Baltimore* was hot off the presses, it was reviewed by the editor of the *Charleston News and Courier*, J.C. Hemphill, who wrote that Wister was "distinctly cruel" in depicting Charleston as "a sepulcher of memories and not a living, breathing reality of commercial times." Hemphill, who was a great booster of the failed Charleston Exposition of 1902, would be delighted in the shallows of his Masonic soul to see what Charleston has become. Million-dollar condominiums sprout like toadstools on what was once sacred ground, driving up property taxes and driving out Charlestonians who have lived on the peninsula for generations. While tens of thousands of tourists flock to the city annually for a taste of her Old World charm, stuffing their Gap tote bags with gewgaws manufactured by Chinese capitalists, the Hon. Joseph Riley, longest-serving mayor in America, lusts in his Irish heart to incorporate neighboring James Island, whose residents are (God bless them) resisting mightily. In 1930, Wister wrote, in his *Roosevelt: The Story of a Friendship*, that the Charleston he had come to love in his many visits to the city was "an oasis in our great American desert of mongrel din and waste." He praised this last redoubt of the first American nation as a place of enchantment "unmocked by the present." He was captivated by a generation of Charlestonians who dwelt here "amid this visible fragrance of time . . . in much quiet, with an entire . . . aversion to show." Today, I am afraid, Wister's quiet oasis has been all but obliterated by the mongrel din.

Jack Trotter writes from Charleston, South Carolina.

Letter From the Netherlands

by Alberto Carosa

The Fruits of Tolerance

◆

The terrorist bombings on July 7, 2005, in London were widely described as proof that the British multicultural model is flawed; few, however, noted that this crisis has an illustrious precedent, the assassination of Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands. On November 2, 2004, a young Muslim, born in Amsterdam to Moroccan parents, shot Mr. Van Gogh on the street, then tried to cut off his head. In a final statement at his trial last summer, the murderer declared that he had killed Mr. Van Gogh for insulting "the Prophet."

Casualty-wise, the London bombings were obviously far more serious; symbolically, however, the murder was unprecedented and far more significant, as Theo van Gogh was dubbed the first victim executed for the offense of "Islamophobia."

In the wake of the London bombings, there has been much talk about the need to increase dialogue, integration efforts, and tolerance toward immigrants—notably, Islamic immigrants—as the only effective weapons for fighting Islamic terrorism. But this is precisely what has been happening in Holland for decades. The Dutch model of tolerance-based multiculturalism is all the more noteworthy in that it is not the fashionable product of the latest cultural trends, as is the case with other countries, but a core part of the Dutch mind-set, or at least of vast sectors of the native Dutch population, dating as far back as the 15th century, when the famous humanist scholar Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1465-1536) virtually invented it.

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As a philosopher, theologian, and humanist, Erasmus was a constant opponent of dogmatism in all fields of human endeavor. He envisioned a renewal of society, state, and Church through the spreading of culture—a culture based on the reconciliation of the Christian Faith with the ancient wisdom of pagan classicism, which he viewed as an untapped source of moral values that had been overshadowed by the "excesses" of the Middle Ages. Erasmus came to be considered an expression of a "correct" balance between tradition and the new, compelling thrusts for reform, which would soon manifest in the Lutheran Reformation. This attitude is also a by-product of a disciplined civic society, confident enough to provide space for those with different ideas. It produced a country in which Descartes could find refuge, a center of freedom of thought and of a free press in Europe.

A pillar of Erasmus' concept of toleration was the refusal to issue condemnations in ecclesiastical and ethical realms, an approach that ultimately results in unqualified and unlimited tolerance—except for those who are deemed to be intolerant because they insist on sticking to absolute and objective truths.

The religiously motivated murder of Theo van Gogh, whose Muslim killer was given a life sentence on July 25, 2005, and the assassination of the politician Pim Fortuyn in 2002 marked the end of the tolerant Holland of Erasmus. In the words of Prime Minister Jan Pieter Balkenende, the country's "multicultural experiment has failed."

Van Gogh, the 47-year-old filmmaker and great-great nephew of artist Vincent van Gogh, caused an uproar among the Dutch Muslim community with his short film *Submission*, which he made with Somali-born Dutch MP Hirsi Ali, a vocal critic of women's treatment in Islamic culture who had already been under police protection after receiving death threats. The 11-minute English-language film highlights domestic violence against women in Islamic communities by projecting text from the Koran, which Ali says condones such violence, onto the naked back of an actress. A note denouncing Ali and other Dutch politicians was left pinned to Van Gogh's body with a knife by his killer.

The Theo van Gogh assassination was the inevitable outcome of a process which has shaken the foundations of Dutch civic society over the last 40 years: the cultural and sexual revolution of the 1960's and 70's and the influx of Muslim workers during those years of prosperity.

While most of Europe points to 1968 as a watershed, perhaps no country was affected as profoundly by the radicalism of the times as the Netherlands. In fewer than 15 years, most forms of traditional authority and hierarchy, the counterbalancing forces that made Dutch tolerance possible, were undermined. Today, when people think of Holland, they think of marijuana served at coffee shops, police officers growing their hair as long as the Grateful Dead, homosexuals coming out of the closet without fear or hindrance, public television showing full nudity, and generous welfare benefits.

So, after all of these centuries of tolerance, what went wrong? Common sense tells us that tolerance, dialogue, integration, and so forth only work when the recipient—in this case, the Islamic immigrant, who, according to the latest figures, makes up some 70 percent of all immigrants to Europe—is willing to accept them. A recent poll by Britain's Sky News revealed that only 12 percent of the two million British Muslims feel truly British. The rest, to varying degrees, believe that they belong to the *Umma*, the transnational community of Islamic faithful. For his part, Van Gogh's killer, Mohammed Bouyeri, defiantly proclaimed that he regretted nothing and that he would kill again, if necessary. It is highly unlikely that Bouyeri would ever have been integrated into Dutch society.

A recent government study indicated that, by 2010, Holland's largest cities—Rotterdam, Amsterdam, the Hague, and Utrecht—will have Muslim majorities. The Dutch Muslim community has an increasingly large and visible presence, and, in Amsterdam alone, there are more than 100,000 Muslims—13 percent of the city's population. Today, arranged marriages between Muslims living here and people from the Rif are the norm, so much so that more than half of the Dutch Moroccans marry a traditional partner from their parents' home village.

If these trends continue, a reverse integration will have to take place: Westerners will become Islamicized, rather than Muslims becoming Westernized. This trend may be accelerated by another phenomenon, as reported in the *International Herald Tribune* (February 28, 2005): In Holland alone, statistics in recent years suggest that the white middle class is increasingly fleeing (from 30,000 in 1999 to an estimated 40,000 in 2004), with the murder of Van Gogh having served as a catalyst.

In his speech to the House of Commons last July, British Prime Minister Tony Blair pledged to defeat terror "with our values" remaining intact. Among those values, did he include "gay marriage," drug addiction, and euthanasia? In an interview in the Italian daily *Avvenire* (November 18, 2004), Adrianus Cardinal Simonis of Utrecht remarked that "Today we have discovered that we are disarmed in the face of the Islamic danger"; the "spiritual vacuity" of Dutch society has left the Netherlands open to an Islamic cultural takeover. A society must be based on a common understanding of public order and morality: "It isn't enough to learn our language." The rise of Islam, Cardinal Simonis said, is related to "the spectacle of extreme moral decadence and spiritual decline that we offer" to young people. This, in turn, leads to the radicalization of young Muslims, a threat that cannot be fought simply by closing Holland's borders.

Cardinal Simonis observed that the notion of "tolerance," as it is understood today, is a recent development. "For three centuries, Catholics were barred from public office," he noted. The current penchant for tolerance "came later, after a common loss of faith—roughly 40 years ago." To put it more bluntly, today's tolerance is the predictable degeneration of yesterday's concept of tolerance.

The problem for the Netherlands, he continued, is a "lack of identity." The time is long past when Christians "would fight and die for their faith." Cardinal Simonis concluded on a note of hope, however. "We must recover our roots, namely our Christian identity." The best pros-

Elizabeth Wolf

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pect for recovery would be for the younger generation to return to Christian traditions. "That is my hope, and I do see signs that young people are rediscovering the faith," he said.

Yet vast sectors of the political establishment of the West are heading in the opposite direction, on the slippery slope of a moral degradation poised to enrage and alienate the immigrant Islamic masses even further. These politicians are the best allies of Islamic radicalism and terrorism in the West. A typical case in point is Spain, where the Socialist government that gained power in the wake of the Madrid bombings on March 11, 2004, immediately withdrew Spanish troops from Iraq to appease their Muslim "kingmakers" but did not hesitate to ram through parliament the legalization of homosexual civil unions on April 21, 2005, the third country to do so after Holland and Belgium. The Spanish legislation also provided for homosexuals to adopt children, following, again, after Holland.

Unless this contradiction is resolved, the West will lose its "War on Terror" and, in the process, commit politically correct suicide.

Alberto Carosa is an independent journalist who writes from Rome.

Letter From Greece

by Makis Voridis

Inviting the Enemy

◆

After the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, the dike that had held back the military hordes of Asia from Europe collapsed. Very soon, the European nations realized that the new conquerors were not the bearers of any civilization, even primitive; instead, they were bloodthirsty destroyers, living parasitically on the Christian populations they oppressed. In the 16th century, the Renaissance reached its peak in Western Europe, whereas, in the Turkish-conquered lands of Eastern Europe, the clock of civilization stopped on May 29, 1453.

The Western Christian nations began to feel the threat of the Ottoman Turks, who had established themselves in Western Asia, North Africa, and the Balkans. The formation of the Sacra Liga Antiturca (Holy Anti-Turkish League) by Habsburg Spain, the Republic of Venice, and the Papal States led to the naval battle of Lepanto in 1571. The overwhelming victory of the Christian nations—thanks, in part, to a significant Greek contribution of thousands of soldiers and oarsmen, recruited from the Greek islands and especially Venetian-held Crete—did not eliminate Turkish expansionism; it was, however, the first time that the European nations had rallied together and defeated their common enemy. "On that day the Ottoman arrogance was smashed," writes Spanish novelist Miguel de Cervantes, who fought on board a Spanish vessel. According to French writer Michel de Montaigne, "the battle of Lepanto initiated the start of the gradual and inevitable decline of the Ottoman Empire." Three-and-a-half centuries later, in 1923, the Ottoman Empire was dissolved, and the Turkish Republic formed.

Today, the Turkish Republic is knocking at the door of the European Union. Europeans are being asked to embrace a people who historically, politically, geographically, and especially culturally do not belong to Europe. As the voices against Turkey's accession have multiplied, Europe has become increasingly divided. Unlike many European governments that support the European "future" of Ankara, no European nation supports Turkey's accession to the European Union.

The political establishment in Greece supports Turkey's desire to join the European Union. The liberal governing New Democracy party and the socialist opposition PASOK party tell tales about "Greek-Turkish friendship" because they believe that, by pursuing this relationship, they can calm the aggressiveness of Turkey. Turkey is not very likely to make political concessions, given Greece's expression of unconditional support. On October 3, 2005, Turkey began the accession talks without assuming any political obligation toward Greece and Cyprus.

At the same time, 80 percent of the Greek people are against Turkey's accession to the European Union—and for good reasons. Historically, the arrival of the Turkish tribes proved disastrous for the Byzantine Empire. The Greeks remained under the Turkish yoke for almost five centuries. The Muslim Turks considered the Christians an inferior race, calling them *rayah* (subjects), *giaour* (infidels), and *kafir* (idol worshippers). They made a science out of impalement, while massacre, rape, plunder, and arson were indispensable parts of Turkish culture. The surviving Christians were heavily taxed and could not find justice—or even testify—in the Islamic courts. The best Christian boys were snatched away from their parents and made to serve in the Ottoman army (the special corps known as the *yeniceri*), while the best Christian girls were abducted for the harems of the powerful Turks. The Byzantine aristocrats were butchered, Islamicized, or forced to flee to Europe. The sultan stripped the Christians of their best lands, which were handed over to Turkish "holy warriors" or to mosques. Art declined, the letters were neglected, and illiteracy spread to the conquered lands. Wherever the Turkish empire spread, it brought destruction, barbarism, decay, and terror.

According to Henry Morgenthau, Sr., the U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman Empire during World War I, "the Turks are a primitive, barbarian, bloodthirsty, bully, braggart, base, mean, miserable people." In his diary, he goes into more detail:

> The alphabet and writing were unknown to the Ottoman Turkish tribes. Neither books they wrote, nor poets they produced, nor architecture they developed, nor cities they built[—]whatever they acquired was stolen and they downgraded it. They didn't even have a normal administration. Violence was their only law. They were neither farmers, nor settlers, only barbarian horsemen and plunderers. Victory for them was to crush the nations that were more developed than them and snatch their property. During the 14th and the 15th century they raided the cradle of modern civilization, which had spread religion and culture to Europe. Back then many nations lived there peacefully and happily. From the oppressed they snatched the fruits of civilization, but not their civilization.

Have the Turks changed since then? Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish Republic and the greatest Turkish national hero, was a supporter of the Young Turk regime that committed the Armenian genocide during World War I. After the war, he led the genocide of the Greeks of Pontus and the ethnic cleansing of the Greeks of Ionia and the rest of Asia Mi-

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nor. In 1955, Turkey launched a violent pogrom against the 150,000 Greeks of Constantinople, who fled to Greece for safety, leaving their property behind. The patriarchate of Constantinople, a remnant of its glorious past, faces continuous obstacles in its operation and is regularly the target of bomb attacks and protests by Turkish fanatics.

In 1974, Turkey invaded the Greek island of Cyprus, in an operation aptly named "Attila," and, since then, occupies her northern half with 40,000 troops. The Bush administration and the neocons denounce the presence of the Syrian army in Lebanon but do not even mention the Turkish troops in Cyprus—armed with U.S. weapons that are there to defend NATO interests against rogue Middle Eastern states.

In 1995, the Turkish parliament passed a resolution threatening Greece with war if she expands her territorial waters in the Aegean Sea to 12 miles, as the new International Law of the Sea allows, and as Turkey herself has done elsewhere. In 1996, Greece and Turkey clashed over the ownership of Imia in the Aegean Sea. Turkish commandos landed on the isle-rock and shot down a Greek helicopter that attempted to fly over it, killing three Greek officers. After the United States intervened, war was averted, but, since then, the Greek isle-rocks in the Aegean Sea are considered a neutral zone, though their borders are clearly defined by treaties and maps.

Internally, Turkey represents herself as an ethnically homogenous country. However, despite great efforts by Ankara, the various ethnic groups have not been assimilated, and they retain many elements of their former Greek, Armenian, or Arabic identity. Today, the Kurds are the largest of over 40 ethnic groups in Turkey.

Geographically, Turkey is clearly an Asian state. Her only European part, Eastern Thrace, makes up just three percent of her land. Nonetheless, Turkey is attempting to present herself as part of Europe, mimicking Europe's democratic institutions. Still, the Turkish parliament and military are closely connected. The political and military leadership exploit widespread illiteracy, securing power by cultivating fear of neighboring nations among the masses.

Turkey is a Muslim country where Islamic fundamentalism has found fertile ground among the poor, who are easily manipulated. According to a recent poll by the Turkish Economic & Social Studies Foundation, 21.2 percent of the population supports the enforcement of *sharia* (Islamic law); 46 percent observes the *salah* (daily prayers); 62.4 percent attends mosques on Fridays; and 92.2 percent fasts during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. In 2003, a Turkish Al Qaeda cell bombed the British consulate and the HSBC Bank in Constantinople, killing 30 people and wounding 400 others. Injured Chechen terrorists are regularly treated in Turkey with the help of Turkish Islamic aid groups, and financial and material aid to Chechen terrorists flows through Turkey. Imagine all of those Muslim terrorists moving about freely in Europe with a simple display of their identity cards.

Turkey's birthrate is explosive. Today, her population is 73 million, and it is estimated that it will reach 100 million by 2020. Such a development will significantly influence not only Greece but all of Europe if Turkey is permitted to join the European Union. At this rate, the Islamicization of Europe will happen "peacefully."

Makis Voridis is a member of the executive committee of the People's Orthodox Rally in Greece.

Letter to the Bishop

by Joe Ecclesia

Seminary Boot Camp

◆

Your Excellency:

Please forgive my extended holographic hiatus. What with the "priestly scandals," the "bishop scandals," the decline and death of one pope and the election of another, I assumed you and your fellow shepherds had your hands full. Besides, I had little to offer by way of helpful suggestion. How could I? Our diocesan paper reports good news everywhere in the diocese, while the empty confessionals *versus* the hordes of communicants at each Mass continue to indicate that American Catholics have to a great extent vanquished sin.

First, let me congratulate you and all the other American bishops. You gallant gentlemen have weathered tempestuous storms and stilled troubled waters. You have broken up the homosexual networks in the seminaries and chanceries, separating the wheat from the chaff (or is that the weak from the daft?). You have raised funds to pay for the massive lawsuits stemming from sexual abuse. You have tapped the brakes on the American schism with Rome. (All right, all right, I admit it. I'm messing with your miter, Your Excellency. Forgive me. Your fellow bishops have apparently decided that "gay" priests, like the poor, will be with us always, that certain dioceses will pay out their lawsuits by selling schools and churches built three and four generations ago on the backs of the working-class Catholic faithful, and that the best way to take instructions from Rome is with eyes closed and hands clamped firmly over the ears.) Now that everything's hunky-dory in our American Church—meaning, of course, that the media deem it so—I wish only to suggest some minor solutions, some fine tuning, if you please, regarding the diminished numbers of men joining the priesthood.

As everyone knows, Your Excellency, the number of priests and seminarians in the United States in the last 40 years has plummeted more dramatically than the vertical drop on New Jersey's Kingda Ka roller coaster. Experts have given various reasons for this steep decline. Some blame it on the general exodus from the Church following Vatican II. Some cite the high rate of contraception among Catholics, meaning that parents who now rear only Little Jim and Little Jenny, as opposed to their own parents who once brought up Jim, Jenny, Joey, Johnny, and Theresa, are not quite as willing to encourage a child to enter the priesthood. Still others contend that the priesthood has lost much of its allure partly as a result of lay intrusions on priestly duties, as evidenced most directly by those straggling squads of readers and eucharistic ministers who descend every Sunday onto the altar of even the smallest parish. Some commentators have further remarked that young men perceive a decline of robust masculinity among our priests, which led many Catholics in the pews to suspect the existence of a pink mafia in the seminaries long before the media shed light on the recent scandals.

To dismantle the first three of these roadblocks to the priesthood would require major changes within the Church. Those who fled the guitar Masses, liturgical dance, and general nuttiness that followed Vatican II are now long gone.

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Those who use the pill or prophylactics—about 90 percent of young Catholic couples—might abandon the Church wholesale if sternly warned that contraception, a grave sin according to Church dogma, may endanger their immortal souls. The squadrons of laity who have invaded the altars, offices, and chanceries of the Church might easily be cropped back, but this action would require many of your fellow bishops to grow a spine.

What of the final obstacle listed above? Is it possible to change the next generation's perception of the priesthood? Are there ways to make our seminaries appear once again as bastions of manliness and dignity? Absolutely. Please allow me to share a few ideas with you.

First, young men love challenges of all kinds. Since many of our seminaries have abandoned their more demanding courses—Latin, for example, and the great theological classics—in favor of women's studies and counseling sessions, let me suggest that we require our budding seminarians to attend a Marine Corps boot camp for 12 weeks of rigorous training. This training will build their bodies, challenge their spirits, and teach them toughness. Such an arduous initial challenge would surely attract young men to the priesthood. I can see the diocesan advertising campaign now: "The Few. The Proud. The Priests."

Second, young men like to appear cool. Enticing them into our seminaries and into the priesthood means making seminarians and seminary training cool. In addition to the Marine Corps training, first- and second-year seminarians could be taught boxing and karate. Not only will these activities draw young men into the seminary, but they will also serve as great stress relievers from classes taught by agnostic professors and castrating nuns. Who knows? Such sports may even build the self-confidence needed by our priests to confront tinpot parish dictators and blockhead diocesan commissars. In addition to this martial-arts training, we might consider teaching our aspiring priests how to handle firearms. (OK, OK, we'll excuse the Franciscans.) Farseeing bishops might even issue sidearms to their priests, making concealed weapons as much a part of the standard equipment as a priestly collar. Despite all the efforts of the matrons, male and female, in our country, adolescent males remain attracted to small arms. Some parishioners may be offended at the thought of a pistol-packing priest, but the presence of weapons, as evidenced by the behavior of everyone from the medieval knight to the Texas cowboy, has a profoundly positive effect on good manners. Certainly, the possibility of gunplay would make parishioners with a bone to pick a little more cautious in their approach to the priest.

In the beginning of their final year at seminary, each seminarian would be declared a "Man in Black." He would receive a Black Classic Hip Length Harley Davidson Leather Jacket ($200) and a pair of Oakley Riddle Ash Sunglasses ($200). We might possibly encourage him to wear his hair spiked or to add a discreet earring. To top it off, these third-year seminarians should also be given black Dodge Vipers ($81,000 apiece, and, yes, I realize the name is unfortunate, but keep in mind we're trying to appeal to virile young men. A Civic simply doesn't do the trick, in design or name). You bishops might further reinforce this sense of manly toughness by encouraging newly ordained priests to forgo the crosses, lambs, and flowers traditionally embroidered on their robes in exchange for flaming swords, death's heads, and clenched fists.

Imagine, Your Excellency, these third-year seminarians leading retreats for young men two or three times a year. Can't you just see it, eight or ten seminarians arriving in sparkling Vipers, whipping up to the curb, stepping all a-glitter onto the pavement, tugging on their leather jackets, adjusting their sunglasses in the blazing sun, walking tall and proud into church?

A pipe dream, you say? Well, Your Excellency, you're probably right. The Men in Black proposal is probably just a little too fascistic in nature, a tad too militaristic, for the Church, though many of our young men, in terms of fashion and style, favor both the fascistic and the militaristic. Anyway, skip that idea. Forget that I ever mentioned it. Instead, let me make a more practical suggestion. First, however, I must tell you a story.

I used to work in a bookstore. Every summer, an Episcopalian clergyman from Tennessee responsible for priestly formation in his diocese would visit our store and root through our Catholic books from 50 and 60 years ago. One afternoon, he picked up a book, published in the 1930's, that addressed seminary curricula and practices. Our Anglican friend became immediately engrossed in this book. He read to me at length about the rigid course of study practiced in those long-abandoned institutions, clucking his tongue at the hours of daily prayer, shaking his head in wondrous admiration at the intense efforts on the part of teachers and spiritual directors to mold seminarians into tough men and tough priests. After reading a short section on the efficacy of fasting and physical mortification, my Episcopalian acquaintance clapped the book closed and asked plaintively, "How did they get their students to do these things?"

A good question, Your Excellency, and one for which I have a ready answer. Those seminarians did those things because their priests and professors challenged them. Why not issue a similar challenge to our young men of today? Boys in 2005 won't join the priesthood for the salary, the retirement benefits, the 30 days of annual vacation. No, young men join the priesthood because they are idealists. They join the priesthood because the Holy Spirit has called them to do so. These would-be priests want a hard life, a life of challenges on every level. They want to live in and for Christ. They want to die for Christ.

Why not found a seminary that is truly concerned about molding men into priests? Why not found the West Point of seminaries, the boot camp of priestly training? Why not start a seminary in which candidates find themselves challenged mentally, spiritually, and even physically every day? Those priests, professors, bishops, and abbots who ran the old seminaries weren't fools. They realized that a priest had to be tough, that his job would be long, filled with dangers and pitfalls, that he would daily face a thousand temptations ranging from gluttony to despair. Seminarians don't become strong priests by watching television, by taking wimpy courses, by enjoying numerous vacations, or by having weekends to themselves. They get tough and develop lifetime priestly habits by following a demanding schedule, by penance and prayer and vigorous struggle.

A pipe dream, you say again? Perhaps. But this pipe dream would cost less than a Viper and a leather jacket. Besides, this pipe dream would work. Those three years of hard training would help carry our good priests through their mission unto the end of their days.

Just a few thoughts for your consideration, Your Excellency. Keeping you in my prayers,

Joe Ecclesia

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by David A. Hartman

Cracks in the Crystal Ball

As the 21st century began, Americans appeared to have every reason to consider themselves the most fortunate citizens in the world. Though there are problems in virtually every sector of our society, resolutions are still within our reach and capabilities.

Although the abundant nonrenewable natural resources our forebears found for the taking have largely been depleted, we still have copious renewable resources of fertile land and its produce and have demonstrated the innovative capability to synthesize replacements for the nonrenewable resources that are being exhausted. Our tradition of hard work, plus saving for investment, unfettered by government and protected by law, has accumulated the necessary capital, progressive technology, and diversification of commerce to enable the highest and most broadly distributed income and standard of living for the average American. This productivity has also enabled nutrition, public utilities, and healthcare that have more than doubled life spans since the founding, as well as military defense capabilities unrivaled by any potential foe.

Since the founding, America's stock of human capital has multiplied manifold as well. One of the highest birthrates in the world and the immigration of people seeking the privileges and responsibilities of American citizenship combined as a driving force for more than two centuries of economic growth, without diminishing the quality of life and functionality of society. The universal education of Americans sprouted in local communities and churches at the primary level, and in church-based colleges for higher education. State land-grant universities and public-school systems increased the quantity, if not the quality, of education offered to all Americans. The workforce skills and knowledge necessary for the industrial and governmental functions of the modern state were provided, along with sufficient instruction in classical religion, history, and philosophy to enable an understanding of the present in the context of our cultural heritage.

Limited government allowed families, communities, and churches to serve as the guarantors of childrearing, care for the aged, and the general welfare. Americans organized themselves into a myriad of voluntary organizations that managed the complex functions of society without the need for government oversight. Government served limited functions, providing for sanitary water and sewage management, public health and safety, arteries of transportation, and a sound currency—and defending our borders. Americans were given the responsibility and accountability for directing their own lives and, thus, the right to be left alone by government.

All of that has changed. Today, most of the virtues cited above have been forsaken in whole or in part. The value of our human capital has been severely depreciated by the corruption of our educational and intellectual community, which peddles socialism, multiculturalism, and internationalism as substitutes for traditional American values—creating, in effect, a cultural amnesia that rejects the sources of America's historic success. Socialist welfarism is creating a growing underclass, led by unwed mothers, that is underwritten by hard-working taxpayers. Illegitimacy is on the rise once again, with more than one third of our children born out of wedlock. (However, without the population increase provided by these illegitimate births and illegal immigration, the United States would join Europe in depopulating.) Government's already excessive redistribution of wealth from working families to retirees through the Social Security and Medicare Ponzi schemes will take yet another bite for prescription drugs. Washington promotes unlimited healthcare for "the poor," which drives medical inflation, adding more to the burden on working families. Marriage rates continue to decline as middle-class real incomes stagnate because of immigration and the excessive costs of government.

The United States is losing her manufacturing sector at an alarming rate as the federal government, in effect, tax-subsidizes the foreign importation of goods and the outsourcing of services abroad while penalizing U.S. exports, by denying U.S. manufacturers border-adjusted taxes comparable to those that foreign competitors abate on their exports and add as tax on U.S. imports to their markets. As their workers become industrialized, China and India, which aren't saddled with the burden of inefficient and inequitable taxation, will continue to be serious long-term competition for U.S. manufacturers.

Equally ominous is the continued concentration of the control of commerce on Wall Street, in concert with the centralization of government in Washington, D.C. The myopic focus of investment bankers on maximizing near-term earnings, dividends, and stock value comes at the expense of the future growth and security of U.S. corporations' employees, communities, and shareholders. In the face of a coming economic crisis, the government can be counted on to rush in with massive handouts it cannot afford, as well as whatever regulation and intervention it can conceive in order to save us from ourselves.

Until now, Americans have lived in the future as much as in the present. Rambling and spacious New England homes were expanded to house two or even three generations, and the meticulous finishing was a mark of enduring family pride. The great Middle Western farms were so densely forested when the settlers arrived that a squirrel could travel from the Ohio River to the Great Lakes without leaving the trees. It took a man and a horse one full year of hard labor to clear an acre of cropland to create a perpetual family inheritance. Entrepreneurs who created commercial empires valued far in excess of what their descendants could responsibly enjoy proudly invested this excess in libraries, museums, colleges, and churches for the future benefit of their fellow citizens and their descendants. Whether the motivation was the perpetuation of their kin or their country or preparation to

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meet their Maker, they built for posterity and invested in the future of America.

Today, under the permissive and seductive culture of individualism and socialism, most Americans have not even provided for their own future. Since the late 1990's, households have been disgorging financial assets and home equity and accumulating debt at an alarming rate that has reduced personal savings to a level not seen since the Great Depression, while accumulating record household debt compared to disposable income. The federal government far exceeds households in its fiscal irresponsibility. The federal debt as stated is less than its additional unreported loan guarantees, which are dwarfed by the unreported actuarial obligations of Social Security and Medicare, whose "trust funds" hold only obligations on future generations to pay for current excesses. The massive trade deficit (now approaching one trillion dollars per year), along with the federal deficit, increasingly transfers the net worth of the country to foreign investors—another debt left for future generations.

Our self-serving politicians and brainless intellectual elite congratulate one another on the latest increase in the GNG (Gross National Gluttony), and the Federal Reserve underwrites the financing of this consumption orgy. Foreign investors will continue to accept our prime assets—and obligations on the same—for as long as we consume their trinkets and still have desirable assets for sale or to offer as collateral. The bumper stickers on our parents' motor homes headed for the Sunbelt—"We are spending our kids' inheritance"—are right on target.

The military valor of our previous wars and the hegemony of our current arsenal embolden our leaders to pursue the creation of an American Empire that covers the globe and engages us in wars of dubious necessity that are inadequately funded and manned. America, so greatly admired by the rest of the world not long ago, is now the most detested country. As the United States continues to provoke and fight an endless "War on Terror," Americans will systematically be deprived of their civil rights. The prospects for 4.5 percent of the world's people consuming 21 percent of the world's produce on a "buy now, pay never" plan, while provoking back-to-back overseas wars and consuming one third of the world's energy (held primarily by our enemies as known resources dwindle), must be considered short-term, at best.

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Can we reclaim our heritage as Americans by enacting a plausible reform of our society, like the chain-smoking drunkard or the degenerate dope addict who faces reality and "kicks the habit" to reclaim a lost life? If we do not, what can we expect to happen?

If we follow the "What, me worry?" scenario, we will continue full-speed ahead on our present course, with internationalism, multiculturalism, and socialism as our compass, sextant, and rudder. The privileged caste of "knowledge workers" in professions, finance, academia, and government will prescribe continued growth of imports and immigration to provide themselves with cheap personal services and goods for consumption. The manufacturing sector will continue to shrink as foreign border-adjusted value-added taxes undercut U.S. goods. Corporations will continue to move headquarters abroad for outsourcing and territorial corporate taxation. Declining middle-class and working-poor wages and salaries will further depress marriage and child-rearing within marriage. This, in turn, will be joined by relentless growth of government welfare, enlarging an underclass characterized by ignorance, substance abuse, welfare dependency, criminality, and unwed motherhood.

The "knowledge workers" will find that living like nobility precludes saving; the federal government will continue to run deficits; and the middle class will not be able to save. Investment will decline, and the demise of the manufacturing sector will make permanent the trade deficit in goods. America will become a "has-been" military power, to be protected (we can only hope) as a cheap place for future wealthy Asians to take vacations and own second homes. Social Security and Medicare will fail to deliver on the promise that the improvident aged can bilk ill-gotten livelihoods from hard-pressed workers. Cycles of inflation and recession will result in the confiscation of the incomes and property of the few remaining provident citizens. A consequent social breakdown will replace the American Dream with an endless nightmare. Government will increase regulation and revoke individual rights, "in order to protect us."

We must return to the virtues and values from which the unique character of America was originally constructed. The centralization of power and welfarism have been the principal forces that have reshaped the Republic, and we must destroy the roots from which these overpowering forces have stemmed. Wars and economic crises enabled the confiscatory taxation that, in turn, financed the irresistible growth of government. Crony capitalism has cartelized big business on an international basis, supported by Wall Street investment bankers who know neither borders or nationality. Where the damage to the social fabric becomes evident, the welfare state takes over, and the expanding underclass of dependents becomes a permanent electoral bulwark of the centralized state.

Once, families, churches, charities, and fraternal organizations formed a welfare safety net, which various forms of commercial casualty insurance increasingly fortified but did not perfect. However, the French Revolution and the emergence of European socialist states promised the utopia of the welfare state, which the pseudointelligentsia of America bought and sold to the gullible American public. Americans have since been convinced that government can and should serve as the insurer of last resort; any serious attempt to decentralize the federal government must untie this Gordian knot.

The pattern for reform of the welfare state is obvious if we would only open our eyes and look around us. Driving a car risks casualty to its passengers or those of other cars, and attendant liabilities. So government requires that everyone who puts a vehicle on the street must carry insurance to provide for these risks. But government does not pay for vehicle maintenance, fuel, parking, tolls, *etc.*, as health insurance does. The insurance company builds reserves for your policy and buys reinsurance to fortify those reserves. The same is true for your home insurance.

The problem with Social Security as income insurance, and Medicare as

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health insurance, starts with participants who do not pay premiums for their own policies; instead, they pay taxes that are passed to the current retirees, who are dependents on the state. Benefits are provided through third-party disbursement. We must convert this system to one of personal-responsibility accounts that are required of, and belong to, each citizen; premiums would amortize the expected minimum income and healthcare costs for a lifetime. The healthcare accounts would have private major-medical insurance, but the reserves and returns on the same would belong to the insured. Non-major healthcare would be competitively purchased directly by users from their accounts. If necessary, the federal government could be the reinsurer, but at actuarially appropriate cost to policies. The federal government would contribute the shortfall from poorer workers, but only money paid in by the citizens would count toward residual equity. Healthful lifestyles that reduce the expected costs of healthcare would thereby be encouraged, to each citizen's benefit.

When Singapore became an independent state, she was one of the poorest countries in the world. She adopted this form of social insurance, which entirely replaced state welfare. Her responsibility accounts are tax exempt, inheritable, can be used to borrow for education or home equity (with required repayment), and are cashed out at retirement. Singapore is now one of the most prosperous nations in Asia, with the world's highest percentage of home ownership and one of the highest rates of saving for investment. The United States could progressively transform her retirement and welfare by funding personal accounts, starting with accounts for those nearing retirement, enabled by floating federal debt at a pace the market can absorb, which will only formally recognize, rather than add to, currently existing actuarial liabilities. Welfare, healthcare, and retirement would no longer primarily rely on government, and 40 percent of federal revenues would be returned to the control of private individuals for disbursement and investment. Personal saving would more than meet America's additional saving-for-investment requirements. Welfare for any individual would be paid out of these responsibility accounts, at the expense of the holder's equity.

The tax code must be reformed to include border-adjusted taxation, so that American goods, services, and agriculture can be competitive once again. It must be changed to levy taxes on consumption rather than on income, in order to secure competitive tax rates on capital that can help to restore saving for investment. This will help close the trade gap by fostering a resurgent growth of new capacity and technology that reclaims lost markets at home and abroad. The borders must be secured, and immigration reserved for those who can be productive contributors who augment, rather than depress, the American standard of living and domestic security.

Alexis de Tocqueville told us that America is great because America is good and that, when she ceases to be good, she will cease to be great. Alexander Hamilton argued that, for America to succeed, she must stay solvent. The most important contribution that a restored America can offer the world is to provide a model of liberty, individual responsibility, and free enterprise. The public-policy reforms proposed here are based on individual responsibility. They will help to rebuild the American character and launch the restoration of strong families, communities, and domestic commerce—the foundations of American prosperity, culture and security.

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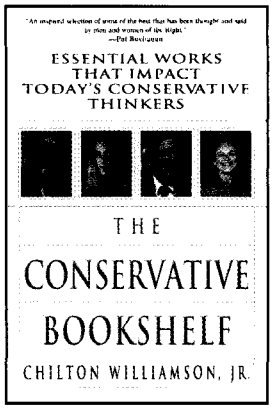

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by Srdja Trifkovic

Trouble With Iran

Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad declared on October 26 that "Israel must be wiped off the map." Invoking the words of Ayatollah Khomeini, he told an audience of 4,000 cheering students that a new conflict in Palestine would soon remove "this disgraceful blot from the face of the Islamic world."

The statement, made in the midst of an ongoing controversy concerning Iran's nuclear program, caused an international outcry. Iranian diplomats in Europe and at the United Nations tried to limit the damage by presenting Ahmadinejad's words as ritualized rhetoric. Within days, however, his government announced the recall of 40 senior ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions, including Iran's envoys to London, Berlin, and Paris, who had been involved in months of delicate negotiations with the European Union on the nuclear issue.

Ahmadinejad's toughness parallels a growing determination in Washington to deal firmly with Iran, and to do so regardless of the ongoing imbroglio in Iraq. President George W. Bush has said repeatedly that he retains "all options" in preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, including military force. That is what some strategists in Washington had wanted all along. Their goals were apparent in Mr. Bush's inclusion of Iran in his "Axis of Evil" address in February 2002: to effect a regime change, or else to neutralize Iran as a meaningful factor in the regional equation. They faced a lot of resistance because of the trouble in Iraq, but Iran's recent intransigence has given them the opportunity to pursue their agenda with a new vigor.

American pressure has helped Iran's transformation. Over the previous decade, a reformist movement had taken root among the usual harbingers of change: students, middle classes, the internet-connected young and educated urbanites. The "Axis of Evil" rhetoric made the reformers uneasy and vulnerable to the charge of treason. Eight years of cautious liberalization under Mohammed Khatami came to a halt. With every new threat from Washington, pro-Islamic media, such as *Jomhuri-ye Eslami*, pointed an accusing finger at the reformers, suggesting that "the enemy is preparing the ground for its lackeys." The moderates were eventually marginalized, giving way to a new generation who had claimed all along that the Great Satan cannot be appeased.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is one of them. He is a disciple of Ayatollah Mohammad-Taghi Mesbah Yazdi, a fiery Shiite cleric who advocates suicide operations against "the enemies of Islam." Ahmadinejad is supported by the *basij*, a volunteer force that acts as a vigilante militia enforcing Islamic laws. His victory over Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, a moderate by Iranian standards, was resounding and indicative of the nation's mood. Ahmadinejad's policies could be predicted from his description of nuclear technology as the "demand of the whole Iranian nation." He accused Iran's negotiators of allowing their E.U. interlocutors to intimidate them, and, barely a month into his presidency, he resumed work at the Isfahan uranium-conversion facility, which—an enthusiastic Iranian commentator wrote—"indicates Iranians' strong will to defend their inalienable right to access nuclear technology."

Until last September, Tehran could claim that Washington was being unreasonable in its demand that Iran give up enriching uranium to produce electricity. Such activity, the Iranians pointed out, was allowed under the current nuclear-arms regime. By October, however, the E.U. Troika—including Mr. Bush's longtime critics over the war in Iraq, France and Germany—declared that Iran was violating previous agreements on uranium enrichment and voiced misgivings about her true intentions. In November, the European Union's foreign ministers expressed their "grave concern" over Iran's resumption of uranium enrichment, a step toward a potential showdown with Iran in the U.N. Security Council.

Iran possesses all the key elements of a weapons program. She has three uranium mines sufficient to provide raw materials, and she has gas centrifuges for enrichment. IAEA scientists visiting the facilities at Natanz in February 2003 reported a series of gas centrifuges in an underground complex that may be a pilot plant for a much bigger system. Iran also has a heavy-water plant at Arak and a major reactor at Bushehr, originally commissioned by the shah in 1974 but suspended in 1979 and subsequently resurrected with Russian help. Furthermore, Ahmadinejad gave a defiant speech to the U.N. General Assembly in which he promised to share Iran's nuclear technology with other Muslim countries. This was no mere rhetoric. It reflected his core belief that "the Middle East can have either an American future, or an Islamic one led by Iran." The country's withdrawal from the Nonproliferation Treaty is also on the agenda. "If this happens," the *Tehran Times* editorialized, "other NPT member states might follow Iran's lead" and the country would act as "a model for all Third World states."

Iran hopes that a joint U.S.-E.U. action at the Security Council would not yield results if either Russia or China (or both) decide to oppose sanctions. Russia does not want to put her profitable business ties with Iran at risk, while China is an important consumer of Iranian oil. Both would be loath to support a resolution that would be seen as addressing primarily Western concerns. Both are likely to insist on a narrow interpretation of the term *violation*.

The Europeans are now willing to grant the American point that Iran is being unreasonable and devious on the nuclear issue, but they will continue looking for a diplomatic way out. Even Mr. Bush's ally Britain is reluctant to consider another war in the region. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said in a speech in Brighton to the annual conference of Britain's ruling Labour Party that "military action is not on anyone's agenda."

Diplomacy has been tried repeatedly since August 2003, when experts from the IAEA found traces of weapons-grade ura-

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nium at Natanz. Iran denied the weapons charge and asserted that the samples taken by IAEA came from nuclear equipment that was contaminated when it was bought over a decade ago from Pakistan for civilian purposes. Last summer, the IAEA came up with a conciliatory report that confirmed this particular assertion, and its director-general, Mohamed El-Baradei, said that Iran would allow the agency to monitor her activities. Ahmadinejad's subsequent refusal to allow inspections and his provocative debut at the United Nations reflected Iran's new ideological climate, in which nuclear identity is seen as consistent with the country's right of passage from technological adolescence to the status of a regional power that commands respect and demands equal treatment.

What can the United States do about Iran? An all-out "Operation Iranian Freedom" is not a rational option. Even with our unsurpassed military capabilities, the United States would not be able to mount a full-scale invasion. Iran is much bigger than Iraq—1.65 million square miles—with three times the population (over 70 million). The Tehran regime, dominated by Shiite clerics, is authoritarian, but it is not devoid of a broad popular base; it is certainly not a closed autocracy as Saddam's Iraq was. When Iraq attacked Iran in 1980, the regime in Tehran could count on considerable popular support on nationalist, as well as religious, grounds. Millions of Iranians would resist an American attack with equal enthusiasm today.

If various E.U. and U.N. attempts to deal with Iran by diplomatic means fail—*i.e.*, if Tehran does not give up on uranium enrichment—a limited military action would be more likely. A sustained air campaign is possible, regardless of the ongoing commitment of the ground forces in Iraq, because America's air power is not committed there. A disabled Iran could be further crippled by internal dissent, especially if the United States were to support Azeri separatists in the northwest and in the Iranian part of Kurdistan. Iran's oil production would be disrupted, but much of its supplies are destined for China, which is increasingly being perceived in Washington as America's main long-term rival.

The cost would be prohibitive, however. Keeping Iraq's Shiites cooperative is a key element in the U.S. exit strategy. An American attack on their coreligionists across the Shat-el-Arab could prompt a Shiite uprising in southern Iraq. Even the rise of a low-intensity insurgency in Basra or Karbala would be a major setback to Iraq's elusive stabilization. If Iran's output of some four million barrels per day is not only disrupted but completely halted, a sudden rise in oil prices could trigger a worldwide recession. If, in addition, Iran blocks the Strait of Hormuz, through which most of the oil from the Gulf passes on its way to the Far East and Europe, the global energy crisis would make the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War pale by comparison.

It is far better to employ bilateral diplomacy and offer U.S. security guarantees to Iran. Washington should offer to refrain from its "Axis of Evil" rhetoric in return for a clear "no nukes" commitment from Ahmadinejad. Multilateral initiatives involving the European Union will be drawn out and futile without a direct American approach to Tehran. Iranian leaders are aptly playing the nationalist card with the nuclear issue, evoking Iran's struggle to nationalize her oil industry in the early 1950's. Ignoring the national-pride aspect would lead the United States to repeat the mistake the British made in 1951, when they turned a question of oil royalties into a groundswell of Iranian nationalism. A reasonable deal could also entail allowing Iran to enrich uranium to the extent needed for power generation, acknowledging her right to this technology, provided that she keeps the entire nuclear program under international oversight.

Either way, the United States should not risk a new, open-ended and dangerous commitment in the Middle East over Iran's nuclear program. Iran is simply seeking to do what several other regional powers—notably Israel, India, and Pakistan—have already done. Her security concerns, viewed objectively, are real. There are U.S. troops in Iraq to the west, in Afghanistan to the northeast, and U.S. Air Force bases in the former Soviet Central Asia to the north. Pakistan, Iran's eastern neighbor, is inherently unstable, potentially hostile, and armed with nuclear bombs. Iran's leaders are understandably loath to rely on imported armaments again. They desire nuclear arms primarily as a means of deterring external threats. The notion that Iran would seek to threaten America with a half-dozen devices that she may build over the next decade—and with no prospect of developing long-range delivery vehicles—is simply not credible.

Israel may have more reason to feel threatened by Iran's plans, but it should be up to Israel to consider her options and act accordingly. She may well decide on a robust response reminiscent of her action in Iraq, with all the attendant risks and uncertainties. She should not expect the United States to do the job on her behalf, however.

Rather than contemplate military action against Iran, the United States would be well advised to look beyond the nuclear issue to our longer-term regional objectives and interests. As Amin Saikal noted in the *International Herald Tribune* recently, a viable resolution of the nuclear row depends very much on how the parties can come to terms politically:

> If Washington recognized Tehran's Islamic regime, stopped constantly threatening Iran, and agreed to controls on weapons of mass destruction across the region—including Israel's—it would make considerable progress in dealing with the nuclear issue.

The problem is that Washington has never contemplated subjecting Israel to the same constraints that apply to other countries in the region. This needs to change. With the end of the Cold War, the key justification for U.S. micromanagement of Middle Eastern affairs has disappeared. America should develop and pursue regional policies based on her own goals. This has not been the case for more than a generation, during which influential interest groups have driven U.S. policy in the greater Middle East. The price of converting Middle Eastern strategy into another form of domestic politics has been high. It has included two wars with Iraq in just over a decade, followed by that country's open-ended military occupation and an ever-worsening guerrilla conflict. Suicidal terrorism has reached our shores, and the "War on Terror" is not going well.

America can ill afford to add "the war in Iran" to the list, and she has no compelling strategic or moral reason to do so. c

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CELEBRITY

Pop Idols

by Christopher Sandford

The English middle orders from Ruskin onward have had an inbred prejudice against America. True, they may dress like mutant versions of Kurt Cobain and bundle themselves and their cloaca-tongued broods off to Disney World, but when you say "U.S.A.," much of the professional class still thinks of headlines like "NEW JERSEY BABY BORN WITH THREE HEADS" or, more topically, "BUSH LEFT ME ON A ROOF TO DIE." Indeed, there are few sights and sounds more British than that of some lucky H2 work-permit holder yapping at the heels of the host country while simultaneously enjoying her hospitality. Many grand pronouncements about America's decline made by visiting rock stars would seem to illustrate this point.

Take, for instance, Sir Paul McCartney. Nothing that follows is intended as an attack or slur on McCartney or his family, or as a reason not to buy several copies of my new book on him. Unlike some of his ex-colleagues, I would not dream of questioning Sir Paul's talent, drive, restless creativity, exquisite taste, philanthropy—notably the last, which has matured strikingly since the day in 1968 when he announced, "Starvation in India doesn't worry me one bit, not one iota." In the years since, he has variously embraced, among others, Friends of the Earth, Live Aid, War Child, Greenpeace, Adopt-a-Minefield, the National Endowment for Science and the Arts, and sundry nuclear-disarmament and debt-cancelation groups, as well as being a thrilling ranter on the subject of animal rights. (The historical role of megalomania in this last obsession, Hitler being the obvious example, is under-researched and would surely make a Ph.D. thesis.) In fact, few of the crises chronicled daily on CNN—whether about Iraq and Iran, or AIDS and global warming and racial strife in Louisiana—are entirely free of McCartney's empathy. To illustrate the general perception of the man, one need go no further than the anonymous fan-page correspondent who writes that "Sir Paul has achieved monumental fame as a uniter and healer," not to mention as the "conscience of his generation" and tireless foe both of "Western cruelty against innocent creatures," and (surely a *non sequitur*) "the evil Murdoch press."

Readers may feel that I have scoured the flakier end of the internet for such a rich example. But no. There are literally scores of pieces similarly extolling the ex-Beatle's musically assisted therapy of his audiences, not to mention the audiences themselves, who are flocking to his current tour in record numbers. By all accounts, McCartney's latest concerts continue to soar far above the level of other 1960's antiques with their vaudeville routines for the curious and the disturbed. If you are under, say, 75, and have any sort of an ear for a pop melody, then he's your man. But "monumental fame as a uniter and healer"? Take McCartney's moderately successful 1970 single, today an anthem, entitled "Let It Be." That's the first, second, and third line of its chorus. The fourth is, "Yeah, let it be." Might the attraction of hearing him sing this possibly be anecdotal, as well as to do with the appeal of moving to a rhythm at the same time as everyone else? As thousands of Red Army conscripts staged parades, lifting posters of the Comrade Leader and lowering them simultaneously, so people clap along and wave lighters during this particular number.

Other than the tribal sense of community, what does one get for a $250 McCartney ticket—for which, incidentally, you can expect to pay three or four times as much from those ever-helpful "brokers"? A couple of hours of tightly choreographed nostalgia, Sir Paul himself retaining such a sober, businesslike air that his Hofner guitar might as well be a briefcase. Indeed, he has taken the opportunity not so much to evoke the 60's counterculture as to pitch financial planning on behalf of Boston-based Fidelity Investments. The privately held fund giant has signed up the conscience of his generation "to show that we, too, can help people achieve their dreams," says Claire Huang, Fidelity's executive vice president for advertising.

These latest Beatles-by-proxy concerts have added a tidy sum, then, to McCartney's already capacious vaults. And good luck to him. But when a billionaire shakes the collecting tin, however inadvertently, on behalf of those crooks, charlatans, and top-of-the-range Mercedes owners governing much of Africa—as he did at last summer's Live 8 event—harangues us, once again, about our dining habits (carnivores being not so much wrong as morally faulty), and then hokes it up with Fidelity, he wouldn't, perhaps, seem to be a man whose first anxiety is self-effacement. Once the conscience of his generation sells mutual funds, what's the generation to think? And why the mass investment in McCartney's own pension plan, particularly just as those winter heating bills roll in? A couple earning $30,000 per year, after tax, would have to spend a week's salary in order to watch the two-hour concert without the aid of binoculars. It must be those peerless tunes, and possibly, too, the publicity machine—a little like an Abrams tank with go-faster stripes—that drives the whole enterprise forward.

The conflict between historical truth and the more excitable end of mass perception has been a central theme in the career of another premium-ticket act currently touring these shores, the Rolling Stones. Of "Sweet Neocon," a song from the group's new CD, *A Bigger Bang*, we read that

> We play your music in rock 'n' roll marching bands, as we tattoo "JAIL BUSH" on the bloated bellies of the war criminal and his thugs . . . A clarion call to end the tyrant's reign of terror, error, and stupidity . . . An anthem for creat[ing] a new society from the ashes of our fires.

How very different from the home lives of our own dear Stones. This is a band, it should be noted, with a nearly perfect, 43-year track record of political apathy. Sir Mick Jagger's first ex-wife thought so much of the matter that she once publicly challenged him to write a song with a "serious message." His response was a tune called "It's Only Rock n' Roll (But I Like It)." "Sweet Neocon" itself offers lyrics of almost masterly vacuity, relying instead on crashing blues-guitar chords, wailing harmonica, and a large degree of critical goodwill. (It is, perhaps, distinguished by its use of the word *Hallibur-*

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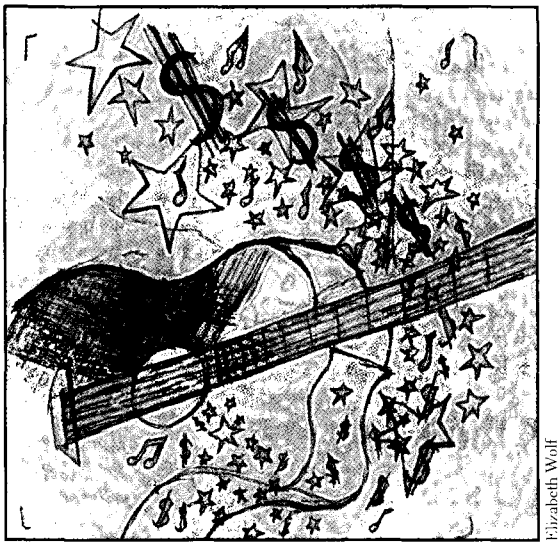
ton in a rock song.) Its composer again demonstrates his keen eye for the avenues down which his public might be inclined to roam, without showing much interest in exploring them himself. As of the time of writing, "Sweet Neocon" has failed to make a single appearance in the group's stage act. Any fan who has committed himself to the view that even the early Stones were primarily about rebellion may wish to recall Jagger's remarks of July 1967, the year of *Their Satanic Majesties Request* and sundry court visits. "I don't want to format a new code of living, a new morality," he assured the bishop of Woolwich and the editor of the *Times*. "I never set myself up as anything. It's society that has pushed one into that position." The drug laws apart, domestic-policy issues tended, and still tend, not to trouble the head Stone. In foreign affairs, there is perhaps a hint of the Vicar of Bray, if not of simple nostalgia for lost influence, as Jagger delivers one of his frequent musings on Britain's post-Suez role, but the essential insouciance remains. With the Stones, saving the world, ending the Vietnam War, and stopping the arms race always had to be fitted into any spare time left over from the demands of their high-powered business managers and the endearments of groupies. "Everybody's talking, showing off their wit / The moon is yellow, I'm like jello / Staring down your tits," Sir Mick croons elsewhere on *A Bigger Bang*, among other such sweet, understated lilts. The last time I went to watch the Stones, the person entering the stadium in front of me wore a *Some Girls* T-shirt that bore Jagger's face on the back, interspersed among sado-masochistic images of young women, but not his name. "God," read the gaudy wisp of overpriced nylon. We have moved a fair way beyond due respect for a long-running entertainer.

For his part, Jagger's fellow sexagenarian Keith Richards continues to be a source of mingled humor and awe. Of late, the gaunt, sloe-eyed guitarist has dyed what remains of his hair blue, then dressed it with various baubles and ribbons. It makes for a melancholy late-seasonal effect, akin to a badly molting Christmas tree. Richards' paternal grandparents were both well-respected councilors in the London borough of Walthamstow, where his grandmother served as the first female mayor. His maternal grandfather was a World War I hero. Richards' father was among the first to land on the Normandy beaches on D-Day and was badly wounded, and subsequently mentioned in dispatches, as a result. Some discrepancy exists, therefore, between the raised-by-wolves legend of Keith's upbringing and the reality, with its emphasis on duty, rank, and sound traditional values. In a biography that appeared in 2003, he was outed as the sort of bygone English gentleman who likes madrigals and sheepdogs, and, more pertinently, to attend the local Anglican church; most journalists sounded as amazed by this fact as if they were reporting on the archbishop of Canterbury conducting a pagan fertility rite (perhaps not as remote a prospect as it once was). Richards remains a solidly earthbound character; the great question is whether he or Jagger will eventually recognize the broader potential of their agenda and outgrow their aversion to politics.

Many of the trimmings to the Stones' latest tour come courtesy of the Ameriquest company, known for its robust marketing of loans to the fiscally challenged or dispossessed. Ticket buyers will be pleased to know of their tour sponsor's current activities. Ameriquest recently put aside $325 million to settle a predatory-lending case, in which 30 federal and state prosecutors had accused the mortgage provider of charging "hidden fees and higher-than-promised interest rates." The same day, President Bush named Ameriquest's chairman and CEO, Roland Arnall, as ambassador to the Netherlands. Arnall and his wife, Dawn, had previously contributed some $5.5 million to Bush's 2004 political campaign, of which $5 million went to the Progress for America 527 group, which ran ads promoting the President's reelection. Ameriquest's titanically aggressive sales strategy, no-nonsense pragmatism, and populist veneer should resonate quite strongly with the Stones, who are charging either $160 or $350 a seat (substantially more, in some cities) with, for real misers, a few "restricted view" bargains at $70.

A third knight bachelor, Elton John, though not currently plying his trade here, has pronounced at length on America's troubled post-September 11 *mores*. The man of real talent who longs to be acclaimed for something else is a recurring and somehow quite endearing figure. Sir Elton, a gifted piano player in his day, clearly wishes to be thought of in the highest echelon of social critics. A few months ago, he informed viewers of the short-lived CNBC talk show *McEnroe* of the "scary" state of their culture.



Elizabeth Wolf

"There's an atmosphere of fear in the States right now that's deadly. Performers are frightened by the current administration's bullying tactics," he went on to explain, while denouncing the Bush regime's vigorous, law-enforced "suppression" of artistic dissent. Yet the ruthless Nazi dragnet somehow continues to miss Sir Elton himself, who slyly lays low by appearing on prime-time television and accepting invitations to the White House. On this latter occasion, the pianist dolefully observed that the President was very civil and that the Kennedy Center award his host had presented him earlier that evening was "the icing on the cake."

You can only admire the way these old-stagers seem constantly to find ways to reinvigorate careers now well into their second and third acts. The current clot of pop idols isn't nearly as supple.

Christopher Sandford's biography McCartney *is published by Carroll and Graf.*

FOREIGN POLICY

The Dissenting Eagle

by Mark G. Brennan

Few decisions require more prudence and judiciousness than when a country's leaders determine whether to go to war. They must weigh the cost in lives, national treasure, and security against the price of inaction. Morality may enter their calculations through the application of just-war theory. They will listen to, if not necessarily heed, diverse

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voices from the media, religious factions and ethnic constituencies, and assorted interest groups.

These interest groups often accuse one another of untoward behavior: Lack of patriotism is frequently the charge against those who resist America's entry into war, while popular epithets for those who favor intervention have included "merchants of death," "masters of war," and "bloodthirsty warmongers." While these debates normally begin with a reasonable amount of mutual respect and fair argumentation between the parties, history shows that, eventually, *ad hominem* attacks, demagoguery, and extralegal measures become the preferred weapons. The period leading up to our entry into World War II is a typical example of this pattern. Unfortunately, historians have recorded this period's exchange of ideas using much of the same vituperative language and demagogic indictments as did the participants.

By late 1940, proponents of American entry into World War II were denouncing their anti-intervention interlocutors as, among other things, unpatriotic, fascist, right-wing, anti-American, pro-German, Anglophobic appeasers. Americans who thought twice about the wisdom of going to war were dismissed as "isolationists," a word that elicited fears of a reemergence of nativism, xenophobia, and the anti-immigrant sentiments that had permeated the country in the first half of the 20th century. While not normally the best example of reasoned debate, political discourse in 1940-41 deteriorated into name-calling designed to vitiate the views of the anti-interventionists. Nonetheless, public-opinion polls consistently revealed that three fourths of Americans opposed entry into the European war. The America First Committee, the primary antiwar lobby, boasted 800,000 paying members, making it the largest antiwar organization in American history.

Elizabeth Wolf

One prominent anti-interventionist was Garet Garrett, an editorial writer for the *Saturday Evening Post* from 1922 to 1942. Born in Pana, Illinois, in 1878 and armed with a third-grade education, Edward Peter Garrett eventually became an avatar of the Old Right with his critical musings on American involvement in World War II. For two years preceding our declaration of war against the Axis powers, Garrett inveighed against "the intellectual cult of interventionists." In fact, some of Garrett's fears, including worries of incipient imperialist ambitions, the destruction of the domestic economy through governmental interference, and a complete disregard for the Constitution and the rule of law, turned out to be prescient.

For years, historians have accused Charles Lindbergh of antisemitism for his Des Moines, Iowa, speech in which he identified "the British, the Jewish and the Roosevelt Administration" as the forces pushing our entry into the war. They have largely ignored the grassroots America First Committee, given disproportionate attention to the small and pathetic German-American Bund, and have pathologized almost all anti-interventionist dissent. Few of these same historians have tackled Garrett's arguments, and even fewer have taken to smearing Garrett. The cogency of his arguments prevents such vilification.

As a proponent of *laissez-faire* economics, minimal taxation, and hard currency, Garrett fervently opposed Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. In a July 6, 1940, editorial, he mocked Roosevelt and his Cabinet as the "magicians who said there was an easy way out of depression" by following an economic program that he abhorred: inflation, confiscatory taxation, and wage and price fixing. Garrett saw all this governmental interference in the market as a truly ominous turn of events that would wreak havoc not just on the domestic economy but on the nation as a whole, as the transformation to a totalitarian state would be inevitable. He foresaw the military draft leading to the "total compulsion first of capital and then of labor." If Washington could conscript young men, why should it not also conscript the capital of the wealthy? Roosevelt's fireside chat of May 26, 1940, was further proof to Garrett that, since the government had tried unsuccessfully to enlist the business sector's support for the war, the President was now trying the nefarious method of "suspicion implanted beforehand" in starting to nationalize the economy.

Garrett's warnings in the economic realm have proved accurate. The payroll-withholding mechanism, designed by Milton Friedman and initially proposed as a temporary measure to fund our involvement in World War II, is still with us today, while the military-industrial complex, against which Eisenhower warned in his farewell address, is still going strong. Garrett was not a perfect prognosticator: His ultimate nightmare of a totalitarian state never occurred, as long as you exclude the TSA and certain elements of the PATRIOT Act.

Predictions of a global American empire fostered by the Roosevelt administration's latent imperial ambitions also appeared in Garrett's editorials. Before his appointment as an editorial writer, the *Saturday Evening Post* had taken a fairly unambiguous stance against all foreign interventions. America had been, in the opinion of the editorialists preceding Garrett, distinct from the other nations of the world for several reasons, including lack of the internecine conflict that had plagued Europe for centuries as well as the impenetrable geographic buffer of two oceans coupled with relatively friendly neighbors to the north and south. Despite the geographic expansion that followed the Spanish-American War and, later, President Wilson's utopian desire to "make the world safe for democracy," considerable anti-imperial sentiment still existed within the intelligentsia, especially at Middle American publications such as the *Saturday Evening Post*. However, even writers at the *Post* harbored no delusions that their admonitions against imperial expansion would get a fair hearing. By 1940, the *Post* editorialists declared that the "sense of separate destiny on which we had been building departed from us, and we have never since recovered it."

Garrett refused to concede defeat. Sarcastically employing the language of his opponents, he saw entry into World War II as just the first in an unending chain of involvements to ensure global peace:

> But before going to war in Europe, actually, the American spirit demands above all a crusading

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theme. Defense is not a crusade. The thought alone of crushing Hitler is not enough. What would come after that? There might be another Hitler.

Imperial overstretch had eventually destroyed all empires to date, and Garrett's March 29, 1941, editorial, "Toward the Unknown," perfectly encapsulated his concern that the United States was following the same path. He cites the break with our historical avoidance of entangling alliances (World War I notwithstanding), the discarding of the Monroe Doctrine, and the erosion of a unique American political culture and philosophy as evidence that we were starting a new imperial crusade:

> We quarrel with the interventionists still, on the grounds that they conceal, or have not themselves the courage to face, what it means to this country, not merely to take over the war, but in doing that to assume a role in which it must either go on and on until it has gained moral hegemony of the whole world—or fail.

Garrett's strongest arguments, and the bulk of his anti-intervention writings, focus on the constitutional impropriety of American involvement in a foreign war. By June 1940, Garrett was arguing that the United States had already entered the war when Roosevelt declared, with no help from Congress, that the Navy had a surplus of airplanes. The Navy would return these planes to the manufacturer, who could then sell them, with Roosevelt's tacit approval and encouragement, to the Allies. In this way, the United States would obviate Article VI of the Hague Convention of 1907, which prohibited the sale of arms from any neutral power to a belligerent power, but which allowed such sales by individuals or private parties. Sounding as though the end of the republic was imminent, Garrett wrote, "So now be it said that in the one hundred and fifty years of its existence the house of constitutional republican government was betrayed, even as the builders feared."

Garrett remarked that the United States had already gone a long way toward discarding the Constitution in favor of "unlimited democracy," as evidenced by universal suffrage (which supplanted state laws in determining voter eligibility), the increasingly popular nature of presidential elections (in contravention of the constitutionally mandated Electoral College), and the direct election of senators. Garrett concluded his August 24, 1940, editorial ("This Was Foretold") by stating that FDR "is the one whom the founders feared and partly foretold—I, Roosevelt." In this same piece, Garrett gives a brief but thorough history of the Constitution and explains the Framers' rationale for limiting the president's power. Then, he fixates on Roosevelt's "measures short of war," which he viewed as sufficient to convict the President of abrogating the Constitution: supplying arms and munitions to the British through Lend-Lease; pledging support to the French; and entering into a military alliance with Canada, then a belligerent country. Roosevelt subsequently made a statement that would underscore his own duplicity: "Our national policy is not directed toward war. Its sole purpose is to keep war away from our country and people."

America did enter the war in December 1941, and the editors of the *Post* punished Garrett for his dissent by arranging his departure on March 12, 1942. His actions after leaving were clearly those of an American patriot; even though he had argued vehemently against intervention, once we entered the war, his national pride shone brightly. In a letter to Donald Nelson, the chairman of the War Production Board, Garrett volunteered, "I am entirely at the disposal of the government, for anything it may wish me to do, for the duration of the war." In a subsequent article in the *Chicago Tribune* (September 19, 1943), Garrett reiterated many of his themes, citing both Washington and Jefferson as support for his doctrine of nonintervention.

Garrett's lone vocal defender today, Justin Raimondo of *Antiwar.com*, is doing yeoman's work in keeping both Garrett's message and works in the public domain. Raimondo's sagacious reviews of Garrett's books, as well as his ceaseless efforts to revive Garrett's patriotic call, fall on deaf ears in a nation where our invasion of Iraq, though shown in countless ways to be unconstitutional, immoral, and a sheer waste of American life and limb, impels us full throttle down the path to imperial ruin. Garet Garrett, the anti-interventionist predecessor of the indefatigable Raimondo, provides many of the first principles for those patriotic Americans who refuse to condone or even accept the United States' imperial overstretch. As in Garrett's case, few of Raimondo's critics have taken up the task of dissecting his anti-interventionist stance on the latest American incursion in the Middle East; it is easier to slander him and hope he eventually goes away.

As to whether American foreign policy would be "that of the turtle or the bald eagle," Garrett was unequivocal. Although he ostensibly contradicted his whole nonintervention thesis, Garrett proposed a patriotic definition of the terms appropriate to his philosophy: "The eagle is our symbol. A solitary people, devoted to peace, yet dangerous to any degree. Not an isolated people. A hemisphere people."

As many students of history have concluded, it is easier to take on a turtle than an eagle.

Mark G. Brennan writes from New York City.

LIBERAL ARTS

ONE MORE THING THAT WAS STOLEN FROM MUHAMMAD

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—from a press release by Xlibris, a subsidiary of Random House, Inc. (August 30, 2005)

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by George McCartney

Whose Point of Order?

Good Night, and Good Luck

Produced and distributed by Warner Independent and Redbus Pictures
Directed by George Clooney
Screenplay by Grant Heslov

With all that has been revealed since the Soviet archives were opened to scrutiny in the 1990's, does anyone still believe that Wisconsin Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy was hunting witches where there was no coven? That there were no communists, or, at least, none that did any harm, in the State Department from the 1930's to the 1940's? That Alger Hiss was just a bleeding-heart naif who stumbled into the 1945 Yalta Conference and accidentally consigned Eastern Europe to Soviet domination? Even the leftists at the *Nation* have apostatized from these articles of their former faith. George Clooney, however, continues to embrace the hallowed creed with all the fervor of a true believer.

Watching Clooney's *Good Night, and Good Luck*, you are led to believe that the Soviet threat was merely a fever dream of McCarthy, a boorish self-promoter from the boondocks trying to cow the nation into conformity with his fascist vision of patriotism. To take down this Goliath of America's greater booboisie, Clooney casts his David in the person of CBS newscaster *cum* editorialist Edward R. Murrow.

Clooney is a good actor and seems not unintelligent, but this twaddle cannot be allowed to stand. Before dashing his fantasy on some inconvenient facts, however, I want to point out that, behind his left-liberal slant, there seems to be a surprisingly conservative impulse—filial devotion. Clooney's father, Nick, is a retired anchorman, as newsreaders are unfortunately called in this country, and, like others in his trade, the old man reveres Murrow for making his profession seem respectable. In presenting Murrow as McCarthy's slayer, Clooney is clearly paying homage to his father. Filial devotion, however, does not excuse tampering with the truth.

Murrow presents the first difficulty in Clooney's propaganda. As played by David Strathairn, he is a dour loner who keeps a discreet distance from others, the better to hug his inviolable integrity. In one scene, his staff members—"Murrow's boys," as they were called—argue with one another over what should lead in the nightly news report, while Murrow sits apart from them, coolly regarding their passion. This saint of broadcasting will not be compromised by raw emotion. If Murrow believed himself to be this earnestly dispassionate, he was fooling himself. During World War II, he became famous for his rooftop radio broadcasts of German air raids over London. This was daring and dramatic but hardly a high-water mark of journalistic impartiality. By making himself part of the story, Murrow sacrificed any claim to objectivity and unwittingly begot a long line of puffed-up news broadcasters who insist on making themselves the center of whatever they report. Today, Sean Hannity, Al Franken, and, ironically, Clooney's *bête noir*, Bill O'Reilly, are all Murrow's bastard offspring. Murrow could fairly be said to be the least offensive in this cadre of pomp, but he was nevertheless its pioneer and, as such, bears the blame for the carnival-barker school of journalism that prevails today. He made it possible for self-important newsreaders to think of themselves as anointed defenders of America.

In 1954, Murrow decided to take on McCarthy. As chairman of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, McCarthy had garnered a national following for his attacks on communist influence at the State Department. As a result, he had been declared a menace by many high-minded commentators, and the left's troops were gathering to attack. On his *See It Now* news show, Murrow joined the assault with carefully edited clips from McCarthy's hearings that put the senator in the worst light possible. Murrow then sententiously concluded that "this is not the time for men who oppose Senator McCarthy to keep silent." At the beginning of the show, Murrow, in what appeared to be a spirit of gentlemanly fair play, urbanely offered the senator equal time, should he want to respond to his criticism. Murrow was counting on McCarthy to rise to this bait.

Strathairn plays Murrow's attack on McCarthy as an exercise in calm, eloquent understatement, the kind of evaluation a well-educated, well-informed gentleman might make in your living room during a particularly sober cocktail party. It is a performance perfectly adapted to the intimacy of television. Following this, we watch McCarthy's response from the original kinescope recordings. Few public figures have been as ill suited to the cool medium of television. He appears to seethe and fume with a fury weirdly disproportionate to the occasion. His thickset, heavy-gutted body and beard-shadowed chin make him appear gangsterish. He recklessly denounces Murrow as "the leader of and cleverest of the jackal pack which is always found at the throat of anyone who dares to expose individual Communists and traitors." His voice plaintive and petulant, he then marshals some half-understood facts provided by the FBI. One such "fact" tells of the young Murrow briefly working in an Oregon lumber camp, rubbing shoulders with loggers, many of whom had been members of the International Workers of the World. It follows, McCarthy declares, that Murrow was a Wobbly, a member of "a terrorist group." Even if this and his other charges had been true—which they were not—the television audience would have been on Murrow's side. Television's small screen paradoxically amplified McCarthy's aggressive go-for-the-jugular courtroom manner, making him look like a bully rather than a legal warrior engaging in a good fight and assuming that truth would emerge after the dust had settled. (It is telling that McCarthy should accuse Murrow of his own inclination.) Murrow, on the other hand, appears reasonable and reliable, a man reluctantly performing an unpleasant but necessary job. In a medium that favors the aura, if not the reality, of informality

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and sincerity, there was no contest.

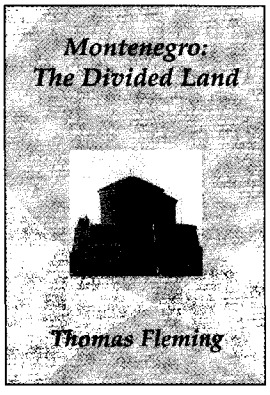
Within a few weeks of his appearance on Murrow's show, McCarthy found himself under investigation. In 1953, he had uncovered a bureaucratic snafu that had embarrassed the Army. An enlisted dentist had been promoted from captain to major despite having been discovered promulgating communist propaganda among the troops. The Army wanted to teach the senator a lesson—and they did. The hearings were televised in their entirety, and, as charge and countercharge were hurled, McCarthy appeared even worse than he had on Murrow's show. His anticommunist crusade was coming to a close.

Clooney has gotten all this into his movie, skillfully but selectively. He edits tendentiously to give us the preferred McCarthy, the one many Americans think they know. Curiously, he gives the game away when he recreates Murrow's use of footage from the McCarthy hearings. He shows us Murrow and his staff choosing an episode in which McCarthy committed one of his worst blunders. They then deliberately select shots that make the senator seem brutally insensitive.

On information supplied by J. Edgar Hoover, McCarthy subpoenaed a middle-aged black woman named Annie Lee Moss to appear before his committee. Moss sits in her chair, hunched over her microphone, looking frightened and bewildered. Wearing an inexpensive cloth coat and thick glasses, she looks to be as much a spy as Ethel Waters in character as Beulah. McCarthy tactlessly explains to her and the room at large that she is being questioned not because she herself is important but because of her position in the Pentagon. He has it on good authority, he informs her, that she has been identified as a member of the Communist Party. Accordingly, he wants to know "why you were shifted from the cafeteria to the code room," from which classified information is disseminated to officers and agents around the world. Having clarified his purpose, he stands up and lamely excuses himself from the proceedings, saying that he has an important appointment to keep. In his absence, his counsel, the ferret-like Roy Cohn, does his dirty work. As Cohn badgers Moss, Sen. Stuart Symington interrupts and asks the lady if she is familiar with Karl Marx. "Who's he?" she asks perplexedly. With the notable exception of Cohn, the room bursts into laughter. Clooney has obviously chosen this sequence to be his *coup de grâce*. There can no longer be any doubt. McCarthy was a bully who irresponsibly battered the helpless with unfounded charges of communist conspiracy—and he had to be stopped. McCarthy was roundly ridiculed for this seeming persecution of a defenseless woman. A few weeks afterward, Moss was allowed to resume her job at the Pentagon. But Clooney withholds crucial information. Four years later, the Subversive Activities Control Board reported that Moss was indeed a card-carrying member of the CPUSA, substantiated by the Communist Party's own records. Of course, Moss's membership was not necessarily sinister. To many Americans growing up in the 1930's, communism had seemed a sane alternative to the reckless capitalism that had led to the Great Depression. The siren call of the classless society must have been especially seductive to economically disenfranchised blacks. Still, would any sane person in 1954 entrust a member of the Communist Party, however personally harmless, with wiring coded secrets overseas? Despite her Communist Party membership, Moss had a perfect right to gainful employment, as long as it was not at the Pentagon. If only McCarthy had been able and disposed to make such distinctions, he might have achieved his goals, identifying communism as a menace among some adherents and merely a foolish utopianism among others.

Although disingenuous—or, perhaps, willingly credulous—Clooney's film does contain the seed of a good movie. Ironically, it is provided by Murrow himself, when he gave a press conference to answer McCarthy's personal attack on him. "When the record is finally written," he reflected in his gravest and most confused manner, "as it will be one day, it will answer the question, who has helped the Communist cause and who has served his country better, Senator McCarthy or I? I would like to be remembered by the answer to the question." This is pure Murrow, placing himself at the center of the story with magisterial poise, seemingly unaware that he has betrayed his reporter's neutrality in doing so. Putting aside his hunger for the spotlight, it has to be admitted he got one thing right. The real story about McCarthy is how his ambition and reckless methods undermined the anticommunist cause. By oversimplifying the issue, he made it difficult, if not impossible, for people on both the left and the right to attack communist influence convincingly. Doing so inevitably brought down the dreaded charge of McCarthyism that undermined one's credibility. It is all just another tragical-historical-comical drama in the annals of our entertainingly wayward nation.

And just in case you're wondering, Clooney neglects to mention that Jack and Bobby Kennedy supported McCarthy throughout his career and after his untimely death at age 49. Bobby had worked on his staff, and McCarthy had stood as godfather to one of his children. I suppose Clooney thought such facts might obscure his higher truth. C



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This Time, Be Prepared

The Serb land of Montenegro is once again at the crossroads of history. The blood-soaked mountains and dramatic coastline of this small land have been fought over by Illyrians, Macedonians, Romans, Byzantines, Turks, and Venetians, and, in the 20th century, by the armies of Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Germany. In World War II, Montenegro lost more men, per capita, than any nation of Europe, and now it is the latest target of the so-called international community, which has tried to create a phony separatist movement (complete with a bogus national church) to continue the disastrous policies that have involved the United States in wars over Bosnia and Kosovo.

Thomas Fleming has written the first well-researched history of Montenegro in the English language, taking the story from ancient times all the way up to the current crisis over separation from Serbia. This is no dry academic tome but a lively account of a brave people whose brave history rivals the tales of Leonidas and his Spartans at Thermopylae.

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by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Sartor Resartus Resartus

Brilliantly original and insightful as Herr Prof. Doktor Teufelsdröckh's *Clothes, Their Origin and Influence* remains more than a century and three-quarters after its initial appearance in print, a recent trip from Denver *via* London to Rome served as a reminder that a new—or, at least, a revised—Philosophy of Clothes is an essential need of what remains of civilization at the beginning of the 21st century.

The good Doktor's book, which is not always readily comprehensible, evinces a certain ambivalence toward both its subject and its own attitude regarding that subject, while Professor Teufelsdröckh's English editor, a Mr. Thomas Carlyle, seems positively schizophrenic in respect of it. On the one hand, Teufelsdröckh is skeptical to the point of suspiciousness, and even enmity, of clothes as artificial distinctions that separate man from his brother. "The beginning of all Wisdom," he writes, "is to look fixedly on clothes, or even with armed eyesight, until they become *transparent*." Writing in a quite different mood, Teufelsdröckh says:

> Matter exists only spiritually, and to represent some *Idea*, and *body* it forth. Hence, Clothes, as despicable as we think them, are so unspeakably significant. Clothes, from the King's mantle downwards are emblematic. . . . [Yet] all Emblematic things are properly Clothes, thought-woven or hand-woven. . . . Nay, if you consider it, what is Man himself, and his whole terrestrial life, but an Emblem; a Clothing or visible garment for that divine ME of his, cast hither, like a light-particle, down from Heaven? Thus he is said also to be clothed with a Body.

This passage, with its clear Platonic roots, anticipates Richard Weaver's discussion (in *Ideas Have Consequences*) of the veil that reveals even as it conceals and his attribution of the modern barbarian's attack on culture to the fact that culture's "formal requirements stand in the way of expression of the natural man." I had reason to think often of Teufelsdröckh, Carlyle, and Weaver, all three, in the course of my eight-day trip abroad. Just what emblem—I speculated—do the passively herding, blasé, unimpressed, underdressed, and finally bored-seeming masses of international jet travel imagine they are boding forth to the world? Or do they "imagine" at all?

Travel almost anywhere, even from the farm to one's country village, until the very recent historical past, was considered an adventure by nearly all people—something quite out of the ordinary, imbued with drama and romance. Flying from, say, New York City to Salt Lake City, properly regarded, remains intrinsically a romantic adventure to this day, no matter that the same hotel and restaurant chains, the same newspapers and magazines, the same music and television shows, are available in both cities. And if it is an adventure to fly from the East Coast to the Rockies, then what of a trip between Salt Lake City and Rome? And yet, slovenly as air travelers on domestic flights appear, passengers on international ones are—if anything, and if possible—even more so. All foreign visitors to the United States know that, for vast distances across the most affluent country the world has ever known, a good meal is simply impossible to find. Hardly any—including, to look at them, those flying business and first class—seem aware that the wealthiest region of the world, what we call the West, processes daily through its international travel system travelers who, in their barbaric, nearly inhuman disreputability, are put to shame by white-robed pilgrims on Haj to Mecca or the festive, brightly dressed inhabitants of a Sudanese village, *en route* to experience the mysteries and wonders of Khartoum.

Mysteries and wonders are only appreciable by those who have a capacity for Mystery and Wonder, a capacity that the large majority of Westerners show every sign of having forfeited. The process of loss at an earlier stage in history was noted and deplored by Professor Teufelsdröckh, who nevertheless supposed that the reign of Wonder, as the basis of worship, "is perennial, indestructible in Man; only in certain stages (as the present), it is, for some short season, a reign *in partibus infidelium*." Nearly two centuries later is still too early to judge whether this since-lengthened season is, in relative terms, short or long. All we can say is that we remain in it, while the end hangs somewhere below the horizon. One way or the other, a world without wonder is a disenchanted world, and a disenchanted world is a world, quite literally, without significance. Since men are a part of the world, they, too, find themselves deprived of significance which, in human terms, is neither more nor less than dignity. Since Darwin, Western man has grown accustomed to thinking of himself as an animal, without ever quite discarding the notion that this human animal is a dignified animal. Indeed, for nearly a century after Darwin, he dressed and otherwise comported himself as if he actually believed himself to be such. Only in the past few generations, to judge from his appearance and behavior, has he given over the pretense entirely. Whatever today's international tripper may be, *dignified* is absolutely the last description anyone would think to hang on him. And his total want of dignity shows, first and foremost, in his clothes—the outward emblem of the meager and ignoble philosophy behind them.

Most of what we call *travelers* nowadays are really only tourists. The tourist animal is not, and by his nature cannot be, the dignified animal. Instead, he is the comfortable animal, the relaxing animal, the pleasure-seeking animal, the escaping animal, the vacating animal, whose chief purpose is to leave his dutiful, serious self (to him, his business self) at home. That is an appropriate attitude to carry along on a trip to Six Flags Over Texas or Dollywood, but not to foreign countries, and especially not to such great metropoli as London, Paris, and Rome. Whether one's purpose in traveling to Rome is fundamentally serious or

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not, Rome is a serious place—perhaps the most serious in the entire world—where encounters with profundity are both natural and inevitable. Whether one seeks such confrontations or not is scarcely the question. What matters is that no one but a barbarian or a human brute would waste the opportunity to make the most of serendipity in such exalted form. And it is quite simply impossible to take proper advantage of stupendous surprises such as San Pietro in Vincoli, or Sant' Andrea della Valle, or the Scala Sancta and the Sancta Sanctorum if you present yourself to them in a manner appropriate to attending the Osbourne Family Spectacle of Lights at Disney World.

Costume determines mental (and moral) attitudes as much as it denotes them, which is another way of saying that venue governs perspective. Perspective is not the concern of painters only but of all artists—and of every type of human being as well. Women say, "I feel romantic in this gown." The chief reason the two- and three-piece suit remains a staple of dress in our thoroughly deformalized society is surely that wearing a suit conveys the sense to the wearer, as well as to the beholder, that he is a serious man of business or of public affairs. Similarly, nothing is more conducive than what nowadays is called "formal" dress (suit or jacket and tie; skirt and blouse, or dress) to the creation of a dignified and serious demeanor that itself conduces to the gratifying sensation of being in the presence of some awesome thing and, at the same time, *worthiness* of being present to it. There is all the difference in the world—no, the universe—between confronting the *Pietà* in a good woolen suit and silk necktie (the dress of a gentleman) and slouching toward it in a T-shirt, short pants, athletic socks, and sneakers with lights in them (an outfit originally designed for little boys, and not very well brought-up little boys, either).

"Why do people traveling abroad want to dress like that?" I've asked my wife. "And what do people who *do* dress like that expect to gain from foreign travel, anyway?"

She couldn't tell me, and I doubt that, if asked, they'd be able to do so, either.

I imagine the answer is the obvious one in this day and age: consumption. Travel in the modern world is simply another consumer good or item for the masses, like eating at McDonald's or going to a movie. Consumption is a pleasure, not an adventure (as sex so often is for bored and jaded people). Consumption is the rule, not the exception. Consumption is something routine rather than special; a satisfaction, not an excitement; familiar, as opposed to exotic; comforting, instead of awe-inspiring. Consumers do not dress, or in other ways adjust and heighten their perspective, in preparation to consume. Consumption presupposes and includes ease, comfort, lack of effort, relaxation, and a total absence of artifice, self-consciousness, and self-presentation—"just like at home!" It is a private or family experience, not a social or ritualized one. Consumption is a type of activity of which watching television is a prime example, demanding no more than what is required of—in Raymond Chandler's mordant phrase—"a fly on a can of garbage."

Even so, a fuller answer would probably strike deeper and more comprehensively than that. To contemplate Westerners in international transit, removed from their familiar social context, is to be struck by the sense of a people—a civilization, a world—that has simply given up, by giving themselves up *to* the vision and enjoyment of an illusory world from which standards, significance, dignity, effort, wonder, and piety have been removed. I say "Westerners," but it may be that this goes for the Americans and the British, in particular. The Italians, for all their political laxity and their religious falling-away, do not strike me at all as having given up, nor as having passed beyond civilized boundaries to a state of postcivilization. By contrast, the British I encountered recently seemed as uncivilized as the Americans, or even more so. Worse still, hardly any were recognizably British at all: no Colonel Bow-wows, no Foreign Service types, no fog-freshened countrywomen from the shires in doormat tweeds, no sharp-jawed, sinewy trade-union types such as I remembered from the year I spent as a boy in London and Cornwall in the early 60's, but rather the sodden human uniformity of Tony Blair's version of The People's Britain. On the flight over and back between Denver and London, reading a biography of G.M. Trevelyan, I found it impossible to reconcile even the decadent England this last of the old Whigs patiently and quietly deplored (Trevelyan died in 1962, the year I lived there) with the faceless English tourists roaming the aisles of British Airways' fiendishly uncomfortable 777.

But of course, in modern circumstances, people will give up. It is the natural response to a Cowardly New World from which awe and wonder, imagination and belief, dignity and honor, pride and the effort pride demands have been expunged. These things lie at the heart of a fundamentally romantic view of the world, and without the romantic sensibility, people have no life to enjoy, having nothing to enjoy life for (which is not at all the same thing as enjoying life). Gentility, learning, sensibility, manners, dress, moral seriousness, a presence of self: These attributes of the English gentleman, the last and final inheritor of the Renaissance ideal of the courtier, are also attributes of the romantic one. They need not be present in all members of society, or even the larger part of it, in order to vivify and fortify the whole, but they must be present in the leading part—which, at present, they certainly are not, just as they are totally absent from the modern mass—to make their effect.

Foreign travel, in the true sense of the thing, is scarcely possible anymore, having gone out with the great transoceanic liners that epitomized it and gave the experience its framing dimensions. No artifact created by man—saving only, in another age, the medieval cathedrals—can match the ocean liner, the ultimate romantic symbol for its unmatchable combination in a single image of the purposeful with the frivolous, the utilitarian with the imaginative, power with grace, fragility with majesty, modern industrial potency with Old World sensibility. In spite of the fact that the great ships are no longer with us, they remain today, as yesterday, the only way to cross. C

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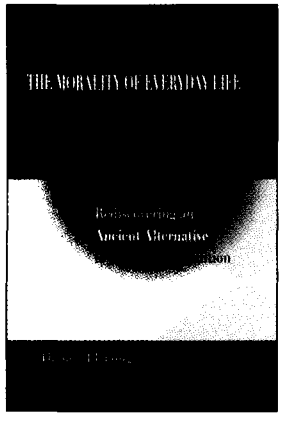
The Morality of Everyday Life: Rediscovering an Ancient Alternative to the Liberal Tradition
by Thomas Fleming

What passes for conservatism today is really nothing more than the impossible moral and social theories of the Renaissance and Enlightenment, in which universal abstractions, such as democracy and equality, are presented as hard truths, when, in fact, they have never existed in any society in human history. Nonetheless, they are to be applied worldwide, at the tip of a spear (or cruise missile) if necessary.

Dr. Fleming's alternative is rooted in "everyday life," the local realities of blood and soil, custom and tradition, friendship and faith, and in the wisdom born of the experiences these realities beget. This wisdom finds expression in folktales and fables, in ancient Hebrew Scriptures and Greek philosophy, and in medieval casuistry. It is the method to solving ethical problems great and small, and it is the method that undergirds authentic conservatism.



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Chronicles' Back Issues, Tapes, and Books

* The John Randolph Club Comes to Charleston *

OWEN WISTER'S CHARLESTON—Audiotape or CD—South Carolinian Jack Trotter examines Owen Wister's 1906 novel *Lady Baltimore*. He argues that a preoccupation with the novel's racial attitudes has obscured the importance of its elegiac portrait of the old Charleston aristocracy as the last bastion of the values of the first American Republic.
Tape (RO5CVCHA1) or CD (RO5CVCHA1CD) **$12.50**

YANKEE MONUMENTS TO TERRORISM—Audiotape or CD—Citadel professor of English literature David Aiken begins this treatment of the world and work of William Gilmore Simms with a reference to monuments to General Sherman in Washington and New York City. He then takes up Simm's written monuments, *The Golden Christmas* and *A City Laid Waste*, both recently republished.
Tape (RO5CVCHA2) or CD (RO5CVCHA2CD) **$12.50**

CHARLESTON TWICE BESIEGED—Audiotape or CD—Historian Rebecca Calcutt, after explaining origins of the American Revolution, narrates the tale of British attempts to take Charleston, starting with the Battle of Ft. Moultrie and culminating with the siege and capture of the city in 1780. Concluding remarks focus on the second siege of Charleston 80 years later, during the Civil War.
Tape (RO5CVCHA3) or CD (RO5CVCHA3CD) **$12.50**

CALHOUN'S CAROLINA—Audiotape or CD—Prof. Clyde Wilson, editor of *The Papers of John C. Calhoun*, tells us that South Carolina was often called by her greatest son "our gallant little State." He then interprets the unique culture and history of South Carolina in the era between her first and second Wars of Independence and explains their influence on Calhoun's *Disquisition on Government*.
Tape (RO5CVCHA4) or CD (RO5CVCHA4CD) **$12.50**

CHARLESTON: AMERICA'S ETERNAL CITY—Audiotape or CD—*Chronicles* editor Thomas Fleming, who did his undergraduate work at the College of Charleston, weaves tales of his old haunts (and the ghosts that still haunt them) with stories from Charleston's past that would be stretch our credulity, had they taken place in any other American city.
Tape (RO5CVCHA5) or CD (RO5CVCHA5CD) **$12.50**

SMALL IS STILL BEAUTIFUL—Audiotape or CD—Literary biographer Joseph Pearce argues that the question of scale in political and economic life is the most important, most pressing, and most neglected area of debate in the fields of economics and politics. He traces the recent history of the debate over "small is beautiful" *versus* "big is best" and offers practical advice for restoring the human scale to human affairs.
Tape (RO5JRC1) or CD (RO5JRC1CD) **$12.50**

LOCAL ATTACHMENTS—Audiotape or CD—Donald Livingston sees in neighborhood associations a government that reflects the small-scale polities advocated by Aristotle and exhibited in medieval and renaissance city-states. Scott P. Richert argues that the centralization of political and economic power has allowed states and localities to shirk their legitimate responsibilities by hiding behind federal regulations.
Tape (RO5JRC2) or CD (RO5JRC2CD) **$12.50**

STOPPING THE INVADERS—Audiotape or CD—Clyde Wilson criticizes the modern Southern enthusiasm for luring in outside investment and questions the validity "prosperity" in a regime with mobile and interchangeable populations. Chilton Williamson, Jr., states that the Minutemen can defend American sovereignty but cannot recreate the old American community that has been forfeited by previous immigration.
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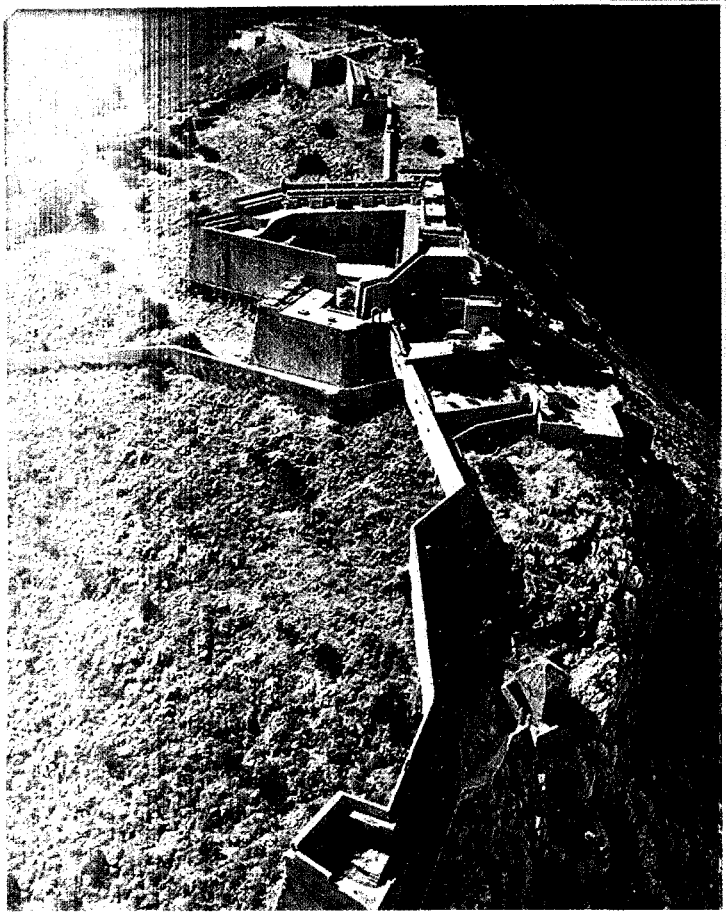

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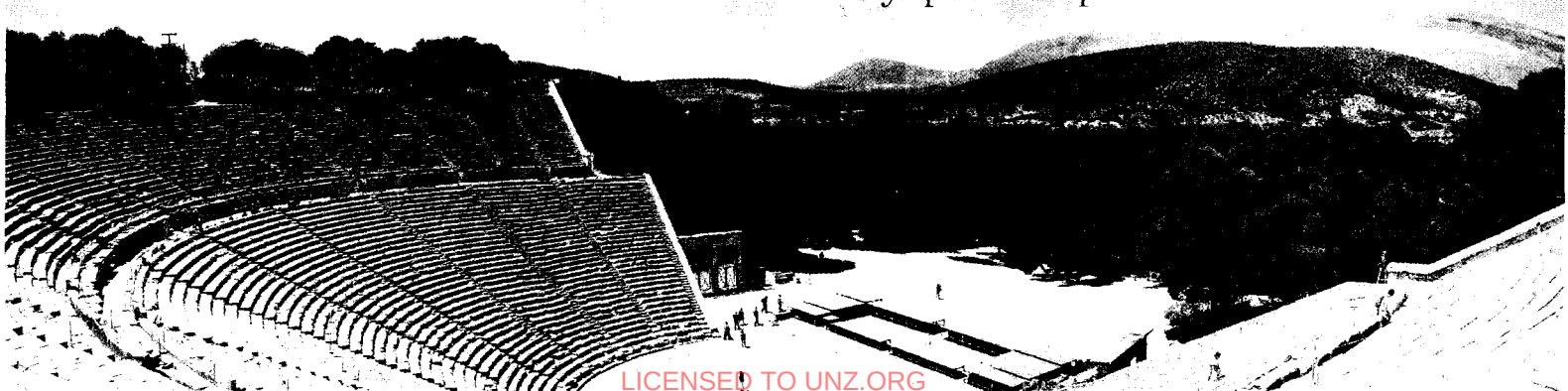

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